



Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts

**Cultural Souvenirs and Purchase Intentions among Chinese Tourists:
The Roles of Symbolic Design, Perceived Authenticity, and Tourist
Profiles**

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Cultural Souvenirs and Purchase Intentions among Chinese Tourists: The
Roles of Symbolic Design, Perceived Authenticity, and Tourist Profiles

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A thesis submitted

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DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. Except where due acknowledgements have been made, the work is that of the author alone. The thesis has not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.

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ABSTRACT

Acquiring cultural souvenirs is essential to China's tourism business. It provides tourists with enriched cultural experiences and promotes growth in associated cultural industries. This research explores the determinants affecting Chinese tourists' purchasing choices for cultural souvenirs, focusing on design features, demographic traits, and perceived authenticity.

This research aims to explore theoretical insights and practical methods for advancing China's cultural souvenir sector by examining behavioural patterns, preferences, and decision-making processes among a series of demographic groups. The researchers formulate an extensive theoretical framework that combines Peirce's semiotic theory with the theory of planned behaviour to evaluate Chinese tourists' preferences regarding souvenir design attributes, the mediating influence of perceived authenticity, and the effect of demographic variables on purchasing behaviour. We employed a quantitative research methodology to collect 620 valid questionnaire responses. The data analysis comprised descriptive statistics, independent sample t-tests, one-way ANOVA, structural equation modelling, reliability and validity assessments, exploratory factor analysis, and correlation analysis.

The findings demonstrate that Chinese visitors prefer three design attributes: "Care and Travel", "Aesthetic", and "Unique", with aesthetic appeal being the most significant determinant of purchase intention. Demographic variables such as age, gender, economic level, and education greatly influence design choices. Perceived authenticity is a vital

intermediary between design attributes and purchase intention, indicating that increased perceived authenticity enhances purchasing motivation.

This research offers valuable advice to souvenir designers, makers, and marketers, allowing them to more effectively align items with tourists' expectations, improve shopping experiences, and stimulate market growth. Moreover, it establishes a basis for subsequent studies, advocating longitudinal studies to monitor the changing consumer behaviours of Chinese visitors and cross-cultural analyses of purchase habits. This research would enhance tourism marketing theory and promote the sustainable growth of China's cultural souvenir sector.

Keywords: *Chinese tourists, cultural souvenirs, purchasing decisions, design elements, demographic factors, perceived authenticity, semiotic theory, aesthetic theory, theory of planned behaviour*

Cenderamata Budaya dan Niat Pembelian dalam Kalangan Pelancong China: Peranan Reka Bentuk Simbolik, Keaslian Ditanggap dan Profil Pelancong

ABSTRAK

Pembelian cenderamata budaya memainkan peranan penting dalam industri pelancongan China dengan menyediakan pengalaman budaya yang bermakna kepada pelancong dan memacu perkembangan industri budaya berkaitan. Kajian ini menganalisis penentu yang mempengaruhi keputusan pembelian cenderamata budaya dalam kalangan pelancong China, dengan memberi tumpuan kepada ciri reka bentuk, ciri demografi, dan persepsi keaslian.

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan pemahaman teori dan pandangan praktikal untuk memajukan industri cenderamata budaya China dengan mengkaji corak tingkah laku, preferensi, dan proses membuat keputusan dalam kalangan kumpulan demografi yang berbeza. Para penyelidik membina rangka kerja teori yang menyeluruh dengan menggabungkan Teori Semiotik Pierce dan Teori Tingkah Laku Terancang untuk menilai preferensi pelancong China terhadap atribut reka bentuk cenderamata, peranan pengantaraan persepsi keaslian, serta pengaruh pemboleh ubah demografi terhadap tingkah laku pembelian. Kaedah penyelidikan kuantitatif digunakan dengan mengumpulkan 620 borang soal selidik yang sah. Analisis data merangkumi statistik deskriptif, ujian-t sampel bebas, ANOVA sehala, Pemodelan Persamaan Struktur (SEM), penilaian kebolehpercayaan dan kesahan, analisis faktor penerokaan, dan analisis korelasi.

Hasil kajian utama menunjukkan bahawa pelancong China menunjukkan preferensi yang ketara terhadap tiga atribut reka bentuk: “Prihatin & Kembara”, “Estetik”, dan “Unik”, dengan Estetik muncul sebagai peramal terkuat niat untuk membeli. Selain itu, pemboleh

ubah demografi seperti umur, jantina, tahap ekonomi, dan tahap pendidikan turut mempengaruhi pilihan reka bentuk secara signifikan. Persepsi keaslian didapati menjadi faktor pengantara penting antara atribut reka bentuk dan niat untuk membeli, menunjukkan bahawa peningkatan persepsi keaslian dapat mengukuhkan motivasi pembelian.

Kajian ini memberikan implikasi praktikal yang berharga untuk pereka cenderamata, pengilang, dan pemasar, membolehkan mereka menyelaraskan produk dengan lebih berkesan mengikut jangkaan pelancong, meningkatkan pengalaman membeli-belah, dan merangsang pertumbuhan pasaran. Tambahan pula, kajian ini meletakkan asas untuk penyelidikan masa hadapan, dengan mencadangkan kajian longitudinal untuk memantau evolusi tingkah laku pengguna pelancong China dan menjalankan analisis silang budaya terhadap tabiat pembelian. Penyelidikan ini menyumbang kepada pengukuhan teori pemasaran pelancongan dan mempromosikan pembangunan mampan industri cenderamata budaya China.

Kata kunci: *Pelancong China, cendera mata budaya, Keputusan pembelian, elemen reka bentuk, faktor demografi, persepsi keaslian, teori semiotik, teori estetik, teori tingkah laku terancang*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
B	Unstandardized Path Coefficient (path coefficient notation)
Bias-Corrected	Bias-Corrected Bootstrap
BRTV	Beijing Radio and Television Station
CAA	China Academy of Art
CARI	China Art Research Institute
CCPI	Cultural and Creative Product Industry
CCTV	China Central Television
CI	Confidence Interval
CITC	Corrected Total Correlation
CNKI	China National Knowledge Infrastructure
CMG	China Media Group
CSF	China Stationery Fair
CTA	China Tourism Academy (Data Center of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism)
CYD	China Youth Daily
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
df	Degrees of Freedom
DE	Direct Effect
ES	Effect Size
FI	Fit Index
FL	Factor Loadings

GFI	Goodness of Fit Index
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
IFI	Incremental Fit Index
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin validity analysis
M	Mean
Max	Maximum
Med	Median
Min	Minimum
MRA	Moderating Effect Analysis
MCT	Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China
N	Sample Size
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics of China
NDRC	National Development and Reform Commission
NFI	Normed Fit Index
NMC	National Museum of China
NRTA	National Radio and Television Administration
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
RMSE	Root Mean Square Error
RFI	Relative Fit Index
SBSM	State Bureau of Surveying and Mapping
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SPC	Standardised Path Coefficient
State Council	State Council of the People's Republic of China

<i>t</i> -test	Independent Samples <i>t</i> -test
TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
U	Unstandardised Path Coefficient
X×W	Interaction Effect Coefficient (Moderation in SEM)
χ^2	Chi-Square Value
χ^2/df	Chi-Square divided by Degrees of Freedom
ΔR^2	Delta R-squared
β	Standardised Path Coefficient

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Cultural souvenirs, which embody rich cultural significance and value, are an essential channel for cultural exchange in the era of globalisation (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). For the sizable and influential cohort of Chinese tourists, their purchase habits for these items demonstrate a respect for historical and cultural legacy and a desire for cultural identity (Liu et al., 2019). However, a gap exists between the demand for authentic, culturally resonant souvenirs and the current market offerings, which this study seeks to address.

From a semiotic perspective, cultural souvenirs function as tangible sign systems that encode and transmit meanings about a destination's culture, history, and identity. This study, therefore, positions cultural souvenirs not merely as commodities, but as semiotic media where design elements act as signs that tourists interpret. Grounded in Peirce's semiotic theory, the research examines how these designed signs, alongside factors such as perceived authenticity and tourist demographics, shape purchase intentions within the framework of the Theory of Planned Behaviour.

This chapter establishes the foundation for this investigation. It begins by presenting the research background of China's tourism and cultural souvenir sector, followed by a clear problem statement that identifies the critical research gaps. The chapter then delineates the research questions, hypotheses, and objectives formulated to guide the study. Furthermore, it clarifies key operational definitions, outlines the scope and limitations of the research,

highlights its expected significance and contributions, and concludes with an overview of the thesis structure.

1.2 Research Background

“Tourism moves people, ideas, and economies. It brings us directly into other people’s lives. Tourism is fatal to preconceptions, as it can bridge cultures” (UNWTO, 2024a). In the realm of globalisation, tourism facilitates the movement of individuals and resources while simultaneously dismantling prejudices through cultural exchange, thereby serving as a significant conduit for cross-cultural communication.

Since the 1960s, the global tourism industry has continued to grow. Its growth rate once exceeded that of traditional industries, becoming the world’s largest industry (Zhai & Liu, 2017), contributing almost 10% to global GDP and employing one-tenth of the global workforce (Wang & Ma, 2022; Pilogallo et al., 2018). Tourism has emerged as a significant contributor to international trade and a primary source of revenue for developing nations. Rising diversification and competition among destinations drive this increase (UNWTO, 2023b).

The industry’s center of gravity is shifting eastward, with China emerging as a pivotal force. As shown in Figure 1.1, China holds a dominant position in domestic tourism trips, underscoring the vast scale and potential of its internal market (UNWTO, 2024c). This massive market forms the foundation for a robust tourism economy where spending on gifts and souvenirs constitutes a significant portion of tourist expenditure (Suhartanto, 2018).

Within the tourism economy, cultural souvenirs serve as crucial tangible mementos. They are not merely commodities but are materialized mediators of cultural identity,

preserving travel memories and disseminating culture (Wu et al., 2022; Gordon, 1986; Swanson & Timothy, 2012). In this study, cultural souvenirs (or “WenChuang”) refer to creative, physical products inspired by cultural features, which act as markers of geography, history, and cultural heritage (Li & Wang, 2022; Balermipas & Manola, 2020). Examples range from traditional handicrafts to modern derivatives from institutions like the Palace Museum (see Figure 2.6, 2.13, 2.24 for visual examples).

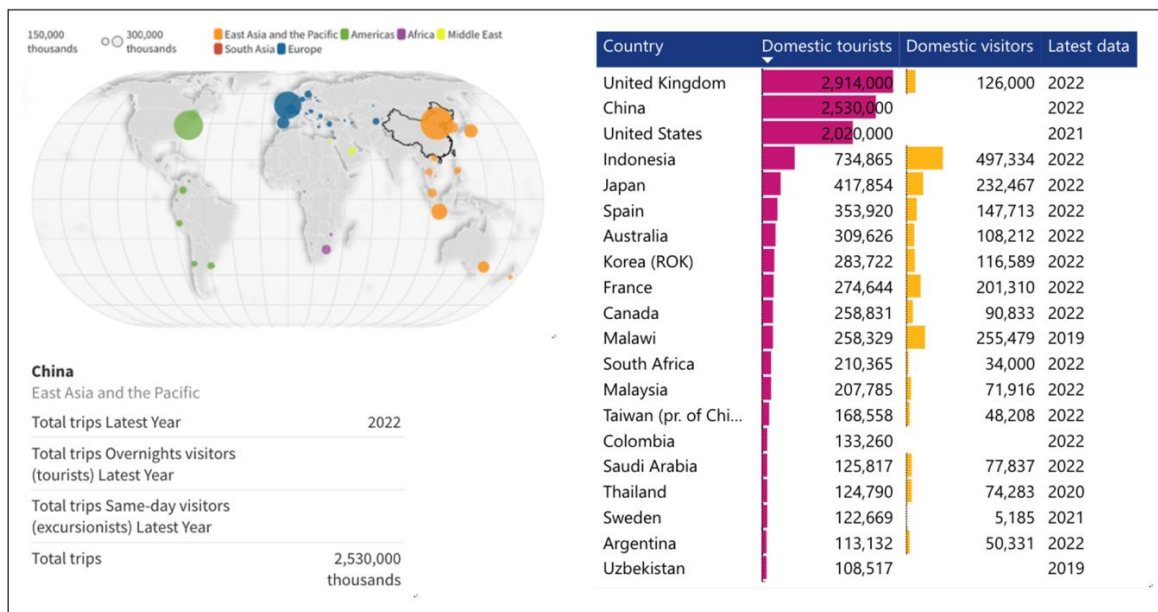


Figure 1.1: 2022 Domestic Tourism (UNWTO, 2024c)

The demand for authentic and aesthetically pleasing cultural souvenirs is significant and evolving. The Palace Museum, for instance, reported sales revenue of 1.5 billion yuan from its cultural and creative products in 2017, highlighting the sector’s economic potential. Post-2023, Chinese tourists have shown a marked preference for souvenirs characterised by cultural significance and design aesthetics over standardised, mass-produced items (Jin et al., 2024). This preference was further amplified by the pandemic, which heightened travelers’ appreciation for culturally rich, creatively designed gifts (Chia et al., 2022).

The context for these souvenirs in China is uniquely complex. As depicted in Figure 1.2, China's vast territory of about 9.6 million square kilometers and its multi-ethnic composition of 56 ethnic groups create a rich tapestry of cultural resources (SBSM, 2024). This wealth of cultural heritage has been actively promoted through successful media programmes (e.g., "National Treasure", "New Arrivals at the Palace Museum" - see Appendix A), fueling public interest in culturally-inspired products. However, this very diversity presents a challenge. Despite high demand and government support, a substantial gap persists between tourist expectations and market offerings. Empirical surveys indicate that 68% of Chinese tourists are often dissatisfied and refrain from purchasing souvenirs, as many designs fail to capture cultural authenticity and are perceived as generic (Li et al., 2016; Duan et al., 2023). This gap hinders the effectiveness of marketing strategies and the sustainable growth of the cultural souvenir industry (Liu et al., 2019).

This context reveals a critical theoretical and practical dilemma. On one hand, there is a clear market shift towards souvenirs valued for their cultural meaning (a semiotic function) and aesthetic appeal. On the other hand, the prevalence of generic products suggests a failure in effectively encoding culturally authentic and resonant meanings into design - a core concern of semiotics. Furthermore, the journey from a tourist perceiving these design attributes (signs) to forming a purchase intention involves a complex psychological process, which the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) helps to elucidate. Current research, however, lacks an integrated framework that examines how the semiotic properties of souvenir design are interpreted by Chinese tourists (influenced by their demographics), how this interpretation shapes perceptions of authenticity, and how these perceptions ultimately drive purchase intentions within a TPB framework.



Figure 1.2: Map of China (SBSM, 2024)

Therefore, a critical need exists to systematically investigate the determinants of Chinese tourists' purchase intentions. Understanding the underlying mechanisms and motivating factors - focusing on design features, demographic influences, and the role of perceived authenticity - is essential to bridge this gap (Liu et al., 2019). This study aims to provide the insights necessary to align souvenir design and marketing with the sophisticated expectations of the modern Chinese tourist, thereby promoting both cultural preservation and industry growth.

1.3 Problem Statement

Despite the increasing popularity of cultural souvenirs in China, existing products often fail to meet evolving consumer expectations. Industry reports indicate that 95.5% of

consumers are willing to purchase cultural and creative products, highlighting a vast potential market (Mob Institute, 2024). In particular, younger tourists demand souvenirs that combine cultural authenticity with innovative, aesthetically appealing designs (Yang, 2024). Yet, as scholars and industry observers note, much of the current market remains saturated with mass-produced items lacking symbolic depth and design innovation (Zhang & Dolah, 2024; Duan et al., 2023). This misalignment between sophisticated demand and generic supply undermines both the cultural value and the commercial potential of souvenirs in China's tourism industry (Liu et al., 2019).

To bridge this gap, a targeted investigation into how Chinese tourists evaluate cultural souvenirs is imperative. This study is framed by three specific research gaps identified from the literature and market context:

Firstly, while the symbolic and aesthetic dimensions of design are posited as key to attracting tourists, there is a lack of empirical research that systematically identifies and measures which specific design features (e.g., aesthetic, uniqueness, practicality) most decisively influence purchase intentions. **This gap leaves designers without evidence-based principles to bridge the quality shortfall noted in the market.**

Secondly, although the market is clearly segmented - with younger, educated demographics driving demand for innovative products (Yang, 2024) - academic research has insufficiently examined how demographic factors (e.g., age, gender, income, education) moderate the relationship between design features and purchase decisions. This limits the ability to develop effective, targeted marketing strategies.

Thirdly, the mechanism through which design influences purchase remains inadequately specified. While perceived authenticity is theorized as a critical mediator

(Revilla & Dodd, 2003), empirical validation of its role in translating culturally-informed design into purchase intention within the domestic Chinese tourism context is scarce. Understanding this pathway is essential for creating products that are perceived as authentically cultural.

If these gaps persist, the industry will continue to struggle with ineffective product development and missed opportunities. This research is designed to directly address these gaps by investigating the determinants of Chinese tourists' purchase intentions, thereby providing a framework to enhance the market relevance and cultural integrity of souvenirs.

To directly address the identified gaps, this research formulates specific research questions, objectives, and hypotheses:

To address the first gap (Design Features), this research poses Research Question 1, forms Research Objective 1, and proposes Hypotheses H1, H1a, H1b, and H1c.

To address the second gap (Tourist Demographics), the study establishes Research Question 2 and Objective 2, and formulates Hypotheses H2a-H2d and H3a-H3d.

To address the third gap (Perceived Authenticity), Research Question 3 and Objective 3 are set, leading to Hypothesis H4 and its sub-hypotheses (H4a-H4c).

1.4 Research Questions and Research Hypotheses

1.4.1 Research Questions

This research is guided by the following three research questions:

Question 1: What are the salient design features (encompassing the Aesthetic, Unique, and Care and Travel dimensions, with a focus on their symbolic meaning) of cultural souvenirs that significantly influence Chinese tourists' purchase intentions?

Question 2: How do key demographic factors (age, gender, income, and education level) moderate the relationship between the design features of cultural souvenirs and purchase intention?

Question 3: Does perceived authenticity mediate the relationship between the design features of cultural souvenirs and tourists' purchase intention?

1.5 Research Objectives

Three research objectives were established for this research by the research questions:

Objective 1: To assess the impact of specific design features (Aesthetic, Unique, and Care and Travel dimensions) on tourists' purchase intentions for cultural souvenirs in China, through the theoretical lens of semiotics.

Objective 2: To investigate the moderating effects of key demographic factors (age, gender, income level, and education level) on the relationship between cultural souvenir design features and purchase intention.

Objective 3: To ascertain the mediating role of perceived authenticity in the relationship between design features and purchase intention, and to derive practical insights for souvenir design and marketing strategies.

1.6 Research Scope

This study explicitly defines its boundaries across three dimensions to ensure focus, methodological rigor, and the validity of its findings. These boundaries are conceptually justified and operationally necessary for the research objectives.

First, regarding the product under investigation, this study is confined to tangible, material Chinese cultural souvenirs. While cultural consumption encompasses intangible experiences (e.g., performances, digital products) (Manola & Balermipas, 2020), this delimitation is essential for two reasons: (1) it enables the systematic measurement and analysis of visual design features (aesthetic, symbolic, functional), which are central to the research questions; and (2) it aligns with the application of semiotic theory, which analyses how meaning is encoded and decoded through material signs and symbols. This focus excludes non-physical souvenirs to maintain analytical precision.

Second, regarding the research context and participants, the study is limited to domestic tourism scenarios within China, involving Chinese tourists who have undertaken such travel. This scope controls for the substantial confounding effects of cross-cultural cognitive differences that influence consumption in international tourism (Swanson & Timothy, 2012), allowing for a clearer examination of design preferences and purchase intentions within a shared macro-cultural framework.

Third, regarding the methodological approach, the study employs a quantitative research paradigm, primarily utilizing an online questionnaire for data collection and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) for analysis. This choice facilitates the testing of complex hypothetical relationships (direct, moderating, mediating) across a large sample but inherently limits the depth of contextual, qualitative insight. The use of online sampling,

while efficient, also introduces potential biases related to internet accessibility and self-selection.

These deliberate scope parameters are summarized systematically in Table 1.1. It is acknowledged that findings are consequently bounded and may not generalize to intangible souvenirs, cross-border tourist groups, or contexts requiring in-depth qualitative exploration.

Table 1.1: Overview of Study Scope Parameters and Rationale

Limitation Dimension	Specific Delimitation	Primary Rationale
Product Type	Focus on tangible, material souvenirs of Chinese cultural origin. Excludes intangible experiences (e.g., digital products, performances).	Enables focused analysis of measurable design attributes and aligns with the semiotic analysis of material signs.
Research Context & Subjects	Examines domestic tourism within China only. Participants are Chinese nationals with domestic travel experience.	Controls for cross-cultural variance, allowing a precise investigation of design preferences within a shared cultural context.
Research Methodology	Relies on quantitative analysis (SEM) of data collected via online questionnaire.	Facilitates hypothesis testing and model validation with a large sample, though it may limit qualitative depth and introduce sampling bias.

1.7 Research Significance

This research makes a significant contribution to developing and testing an integrated theoretical framework that combines semiotic analysis with the Theory of Planned Behaviour to investigate the determinants of Chinese tourists' purchase intentions for cultural souvenirs. Its significance is articulated in two distinct domains: the advancement of academic knowledge and the provision of actionable insights for industry practice, thereby addressing identified gaps in both theory and the marketplace.

The primary theoretical contribution of this study lies in its novelty and its direct engagement with specific research gaps. Firstly, it moves beyond general discussions of design by empirically testing the influence of three discrete design-feature dimensions- Aesthetic, Unique, and Care and Travel. This provides granular evidence for the application of semiotic theory in souvenir design, closing the gap between abstract cultural symbolism and measurable consumer response. Secondly, the investigation into the moderating effects of key demographic factors (age, gender, income, and education level) on the design-preference relationship addresses the under-explored heterogeneity within the Chinese tourist market. This enriches tourist consumption theory by detailing how demographic segmentation variables condition behavioural outcomes. Thirdly, and most pivotally, the study validates perceived authenticity as a critical mediating mechanism between design features and purchase intention. This finding elucidates the psychological pathway through which design influences decision-making, offering a crucial explanatory link that bridges semiotic interpretation and consumer behaviour, thus directly addressing a key theoretical shortfall.

In terms of practical contribution, the findings offer direct, applicable value to multiple stakeholders within the cultural souvenir ecosystem. For designers and manufacturers, the empirical confirmation of key design drivers provides a clear evidence-based guideline for product development, facilitating the creation of souvenirs that are both culturally resonant and commercially attractive. For marketers, the insights into demographic moderators enable more precise audience segmentation and targeting, while the understanding of authenticity's mediating role informs communication strategies that effectively highlight cultural value to stimulate purchase. Collectively, these contributions support the development of a more competitive and sustainable souvenir industry in China,

one better equipped to meet evolving market demands through informed innovation. Finally, the evidence generated herein offers a robust foundation for policy formulation by relevant cultural and tourism authorities. It can guide initiatives in cultural-creative industry development, heritage modernisation, and standard-setting, encouraging a deeper integration of cultural authenticity with innovative design for broader cultural and economic benefit.

1.8 Operational Definitions

This research must clarify relevant hypothesis terminology throughout this document to avoid ambiguity and potential misunderstandings. The hypothesis variables terminology as shown in Table 1.2:

Table 1.2: Variable Terminology

Independent variables (IV)	Dependent variable (DV)	Moderator Variable (MoV)	Mediator Variable (MeV)	Control variables (CV)
Design Features	Purchase Intention	Personal Factors	Perceived Authenticity	Travel Motivation, Travel Satisfaction, Travel Destination, Travel Time.

1.9 Structure of the Thesis

Figure 1.3 illustrates the six chapters that constitute this thesis.

Chapter 1 introduces the research background, problem statement, research questions, hypothesis framework, research objectives, scope of the study, operational definitions, and research significance. These sections provide a comprehensive overview that guides the subsequent investigation.

Chapter 2 presents a literature review of the key issues affecting Chinese tourists' purchases of cultural souvenirs. It explores how demographic characteristics, design preferences, perceived authenticity, and design features influence consumers' decisions and purchasing behaviours. Specific attention is given to demographic factors such as age, gender, income, and education in shaping design preferences and the impact of perceived authenticity on purchase intentions. The chapter also draws on semiotics and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to assess how design features impacts consumer engagement. This review aims to identify research gaps and expand the academic scope of the study.

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology employed in This research. A quantitative approach forms the primary method, supplemented by qualitative techniques. The chapter systematically explains the research framework, specific strategies, and procedures followed at various stages of the investigation.

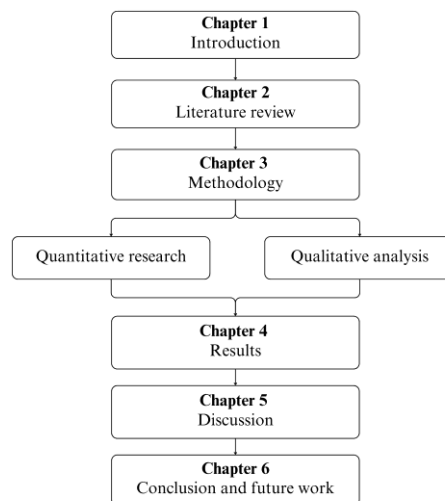


Figure 1.3: Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 4 presents and analyses the data collected. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) is used to assess the proposed hypotheses. Independent sample t-tests and ANOVA

are applied to investigate the influence of age, gender, income, and education on design preferences. The mediating role of perceived authenticity between design features and purchase intention is assessed through mediation analysis. We test reliability and validity using scale reliability checks, exploratory factor analysis, and correlation analysis. Additionally, qualitative analysis of open-ended questions (F1 and F2) identifies tourist preferences and offers suggestions for improvement. This chapter constitutes the basis of the thesis in terms of analysis and results.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings obtained and highlights the theoretical and practical contributions of the study.

Chapter 6 concludes the thesis and makes valuable suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

As materialised mediators of cultural identity transposition (Swanson & Timothy, 2012), cultural souvenirs are of dual importance in design strategy and tourist behaviour studies, crucial for the joint development of cultural heritage and the tourism economy. Amidst a market shift from mass standardisation towards bespoke customisation (Wang et al., 2016), understanding the purchasing behaviour of Chinese tourists, a pivotal consumer segment, has become essential for formulating effective market strategies (Liu et al., 2019).

To this end, this chapter will follow a clear line of argument: it will first establish the theoretical foundations of the study (Section 2.2), clarifying why and how semiotics and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) provide support for this research. Subsequently, it will delve into the core subject of the study - cultural souvenirs (Section 2.3) - and their market context. The focus will then shift to the main actors of this research - Chinese tourists and their shopping behaviour (Section 2.4), followed by a systematic review of the key factors influencing their purchase decisions (Section 2.5), including design features, demographic variables, and perceived authenticity. Finally, building upon a critical synthesis of the aforementioned literature, the conceptual framework for This research will be derived and the research hypotheses proposed (Section 2.6). The entire review thereby aims to progress from a relatively disparate body of literature, progressively converging to construct an integrated, explanation-oriented research model.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

2.2.1 Semiotic Theory

Semiotic theory is a key souvenir design component, combining art and cultural inheritance. It aids in designers' interpretation and communication of souvenirs' symbolic value, affecting tourists' perceptions and purchase decisions. In order to offer direction and cultural understanding for design practice, this research examines how semiotics is applied in souvenir design, investigate scholarly theoretical stances, and assess how these ideas are applied in actual design.

2.2.1.1 Basic Concepts

In examining the evolution of semiotics, this research cannot help but recall Courtes' important 1983 work, in which he emphasised the significance of a specific definition of the idea of "sign" (Courtes, 1983, p. 261). Courtes defined "sign" as any object or element capable of signifying something else, and this definition became the widely recognised foundation for semiotics. Batu (2012) demonstrates how symbols express specific meanings and purposes in design practice using visual aspects such as shape, colour, and texture (Batu, 2012). The process of symbol formation entails combining abstract notions (signified) with sense-perceivable forms (signifiers), and this theory is especially relevant in the field of design since it teaches designers how to create structures with deep meaning (KÖran, 2010).

Semiotics is used in the design process to help designers extract crucial elements, restructure existing concepts, and deconstruct existing designs to generate new meaning structures, as emphasised in prior research (Batu, 2012). In 2010, KÖran claimed that any human-created artefact intrinsically bears self-expressed meaning, providing a broader understanding of semiotics. Several significant figures (Table 2.1) have affected the

development of semiotics, notably Saussure, Peirce, and Greimas, whose theories have a tremendous impact on the subject (Salupere, 2011).

Table 2.1: Comparison of Key Figures in Semiotics (Salupere, 2011)

	Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913)	Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914)	Algirdas Julien Greimas (1917-1992)
Nationality	Switzerland	United States	Lithuania / France
Theory	Structuralist semiotics	The semiotics of pragmatism	Structural semantics
Definition	A sign is a combination of signifier and signified	Symbols are a ternary relation of representamen, object, and interpretant	The symbol is the basic unit of meaning production
Classification	Language symbol: Signifier / signified	The ternary view of symbols: Representamen, object, interpretant	Symbol square: Action element, Object element, dispatcher, receiver
Theoretical Influence	Linguistics, Structuralism	Logic, pragmatism, and cognitive science	Linguistics, anthropology, literary criticism
Theoretical Characteristics	A study of language as a sign system	Pragmatic interpretation of symbols	Analysis of the narrative structures of symbols

Peirce’s theory is particularly relevant to This research, as it emphasises dynamic interpretation and provides a versatile analytical framework for the multidimensional analysis of visual elements and symbols. This aspect is crucial to cultural and creative expression in souvenir design.

2.2.1.2 Peirce’s Semiotics

Charles Sanders Peirce partially founded modern semiotics. A crucial component of semiotic theory is Peirce’s classification of symbols. Peirce (1931) wrote that semiotics is “semiotics” and offered the following definition when asked what a sign is: “A sign is

something A which points to a fact or object B in order to give some interpretative thought C to that fact or object.” He believed that the meaning of a symbol derives from “what it does” and that this constitutes the symbol’s primary function. In other words, a sign is a guide to behaviour.

Jia and Zhu (2002) examined Peirce’s theory of the “three natures of being” and proposed that there are three modes of being that constitute the phenomenal world we inhabit:

- The primary being is the first kind of being, which exists independently. The existence of entities such as “red”, “blue”, “man”, “woman”, and so forth is considered abstract and independent of space and time; such concepts acquire meaning only through interaction with secondary beings.
- The second kind, or secondary being, refers to entities about others. Their existence is relational and dependent, such as “hot” and “cold”, “tall” and “short”, “wife” and “husband”, “mother” and “child”. One cannot exist meaningfully without the other.
- The third kind of being refers to a tertiary being, which emerges from the interaction between the first two kinds. This refers to entities such as “court,” based on complex relational structures. All spiritual and conscious phenomena are included in this category.

Peirce’s classification of the phenomenal world into three levels directly influenced the development of his semiotic theory. It served as a key philosophical tenet of his symbolic framework. According to Peirce, a symbol comprises three elements: the interpretant, the

object, and the representamen (sign/symbol). Jia and Zhu (2002) illustrated Peirce's "trichotomies" as shown in Figure 2.1:

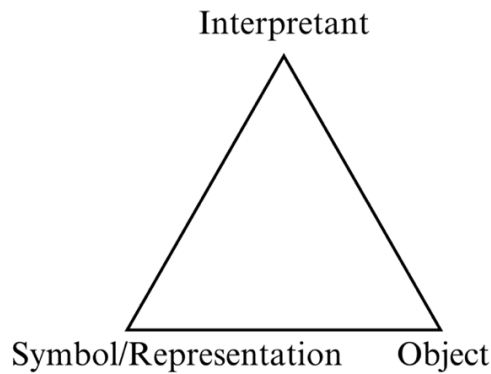


Figure 2.1: Peirce's Semiotics Theory Framework
(Jia & Zhu, 2002)

The image illustrates that symbols describe objects by expressing individuals' mental states. In other words, people interpret symbols. For example, peonies represent prosperity, roses symbolise love, plums signify tenacity, and lotuses embody integrity. These symbols reflect the materialisation of human thought, consciousness, and emotion. Without human interpretation, the sign loses its value. Objects are represented through social conventions, interpretants are indicated through physical associations, and representamens are conveyed through resemblance. This classification framework can be applied to analyse the meaning communicated through design features.

- **Symbol/Representamen:** Something that, in some capacity, stands for another object in a person's mind. It portrays a message through imitation or likeness, forming an identifiable symbol within that person's perception. Through representation, designers can create visually symbolic images that are intuitive and instantly recognisable, such as patterns resembling cultural motifs or forms inspired by nature.






- **Interpretant:** The meaning derived when a symbol is interpreted, formed in the interpreter's mind. It involves a sign with a physical or causal link to its object. Designers can utilise interpretants by selecting materials or techniques that evoke a specific place or event, thus enhancing the thematic resonance of the souvenir.
- **Object:** Symbols based on conventional associations or social norms. For instance, designers might use national colours, emblems, or historical motifs to craft symbols imbued with cultural significance.

Peirce proposed the triadic relationship of representamen, object, and interpretant as a foundational framework for understanding symbols. He utilised this model to classify and elaborate on symbols from three perspectives. Among these, the trichotomy of icon, index, and symbol is the most recognised and influential:

- An **icon** bears a resemblance to its object and shares similar qualities. Icons include diagrammatic icons and imagic icons. The former encompasses diagrams, mirrors, and illustrations, while the latter involves recognisable forms such as signs and maps.
- An **index** has a direct connection to its referent, often based on a causal or spatial relationship, for example, smoke indicating fire or a skull signifying danger.
- A **symbol** relies on social or cultural convention to establish its link to the object, even though the sign may bear no intrinsic relation to the referent.

Table 2.2 presents a symbolic conversion scheme for the image of the “Sun”, classified according to these three types.

Table 2.2: Tripartite Classification of Sun Symbols

Referent	Icon	Index	Symbol
			 OR 
Sun image	The sun's shape is simplified into a geometric form combining triangles and circles, resembling the sun's appearance.	The sun is red due to the Rayleigh scattering effect; using red to indicate the sun reflects a scientific, causal relationship.	Red has no intrinsic emotional value, but through social conventions, it has been arbitrarily imbued with symbolic meanings, such as "hope" (e.g. the Japanese flag) or "warning" (e.g. the red sun taboo among Australian Aboriginal cultures).

Semiotics is based on a scientific metalanguage in the academic field of souvenir design. This linguistic framework transcends the constraints of ordinary communication and enables designers to communicate and express themselves in novel ways. As Wood noted in 2017, this metalanguage allows designers to explore the processes of production and reproduction and how meaning is generated within these processes (Wood, 2017). This theory offers a distinctive perspective on souvenir design and emphasises the importance of symbolic meaning construction throughout the design process.

Furthermore, according to Peirce's semiotic theory, the meaning of symbols is dynamic. Therefore, designers must consider the audience's interpretation of symbols and their associations during production (Wood, 2017). Peirce's theory highlights the hierarchy of symbols, stating that a sign can possess multiple degrees of meaning, as elaborated by Greenlee (2018). Zhang and Yu (2024) emphasised that "propagation" is a primary aspect of Peirce's semiotics (Zhao, 2017). Symbols are made up of the "object, representamen, and interpretant". They have a three-part, flexible, constantly changing relationship called the

theory of ternary symbol production (as shown in Figure 2.2). The “infinite derivative” of the interpretant embodies the openness and dynamism represented in Peirce’s semiotics.

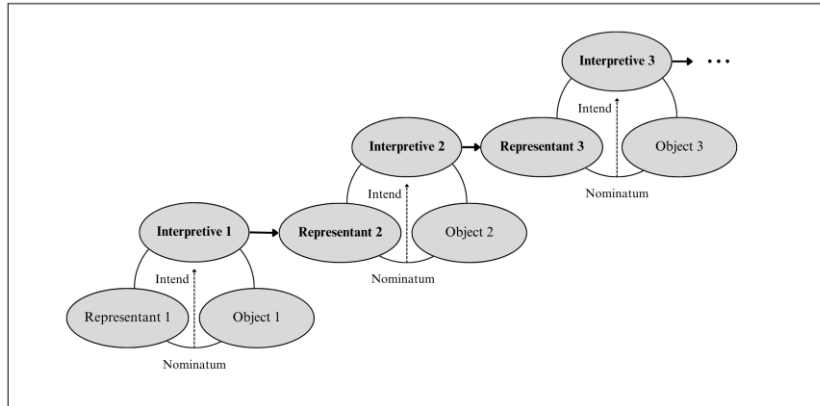


Figure 2.2: The Dynamic Infinity Derivation of the Triple Composition of Peirce’s Symbols (Zhang & Yu, 2024)

Figure 2.2 illustrates the process of development of symbolic meanings of the model and may be used as a source of inspiration for using strategies in designing souvenirs. Designers may benefit from this strategy by creating symbols that may lose or gain their meanings in the future or other contexts. Such complexity in using the design may transform souvenirs from simple souvenirs to objects full of story and feeling.

Furthermore, Peirce defines the motivativity of symbols, which is the inherent connection between symbols and their objects (West, 2021). Designers can apply this approach to develop symbols that are intuitively linked to the theme of memorabilia, for example, by employing visuals or colours associated with a specific event or location. This natural connection can help the audience feel a sense of identity with the item and make it more appealing.

He also draws attention to the fact that the groups that use symbols jointly determine the meaning attached to them (Gorlée, 2022; Yelle, 2021). This does highlight the need for

designers to be mindful of their target audience's cultural background and shared experiences when developing symbols to ensure they are correctly interpreted and felt. This cultural awareness is crucial when designing souvenirs that can cross cultural boundaries.

His semiotic theory provides a means for designers to approach their thinking about and development of visual symbols that communicate a specific cultural or historical message and invoke an emotional response from the audience, making memorabilia more appealing and valuable.

2.2.1.3 Application in Design

The application of semiotic theory in souvenir design is a scientific metalanguage that transcends the limitations of everyday natural language and offers designers a new level of language communication and expression. Nöth (1988) investigated the semiotic paradigm. He found that people regard things as practical, commercial and sociocultural symbols in three symbolic planes. The meaning of these symbols is not attached to the things themselves but generated in the description of products by producers, in the encounter with things by consumers, or the consumers' assessment of the context of the commodity system. This idea inspires souvenir designers by transmitting cultural meaning and enhancing consumers' identification through symbols.

The method of using semiotics in souvenir design to express symbolic significance and cultural value is shown in the following example. Paraskevaïdis and Weidenfeld (2021) used Peirce's semiotics approach to explore the perceived and anticipated authenticity of the White Tower of Thessaloniki in Greece and its associated cultural significance. Their research shows that tourists and official destination marketers recognise iconic and indexical authenticity. This result provides an important reference for souvenir design, which should

consider the multidimensionality and complexity of cultural symbols (Paraskevaïdis & Weidenfeld, 2021).

Hunter (2016) studied the social construction of the online destination image of Seoul using the visual semiotics method and the Seoul destination image constructed by online images. His research results show that different internet platforms describe Seoul in different ways. For souvenir design, this provides an important inspiration for how customers understand and accept symbols in different cultural contexts (Hunter, 2016).

Haldrup's (2017) study about the role of souvenirs in the home space and their role as material and tangible cohabitants gave designers a novel idea of how to improve users' emotional experience and cultural identification through souvenir design. Semiotic theory is an effective method in souvenir design because not only can it help designers to understand the meaning of cultural symbols better, but it can also help designers to express the meaning of cultural symbols through design. By conducting in-depth research and using semiotic theory, designers can produce keepsakes with meaning and culture, satisfying consumers' demand for cultural experience and emotional connection.

Frow's (1991) study about the semiotics of tourism and nostalgia as supplemental information is introduced below as a theoretical basis for memorabilia research (memorabilia is also regarded as a symbolic extension of the tourist experience). Berger's (2011) ethnosemiotic analysis of Japanese tourism is introduced below as supplemental information. This theoretical basis can offer a more cultural and semiotic analysis for souvenir design. Using semiotic theory in the design of souvenirs can help recognise the symbolic nature of souvenirs. Souvenirs are often seen as more than simple objects; they are symbols that can communicate information about a culture.

Eco’s semiotic theory in 1976 stated that cultural souvenirs have high symbolic value and can convey distinct local culture and historical narratives through their images, colours, patterns and other features. The symbols represent the qualities of the tourist destination as well as knowledge and feelings about the overall experience (Eco, 1976). The “8 TRANS” design method for cultural souvenirs suggested by Decrop and Masset in 2014 can more effectively incorporate unique local cultural features into creating tourist souvenirs, which is helpful for reference.

Table 2.3: “8 TRANS” Cultural Souvenir Design Law (Decrop & Masset, 2014)

8 TRANS	Design Approach
Translate	An alternative viewpoint on the architectural components of a cultural system.
Transmute	Modify the original form and give it a fresh interpretation.
Transpire	Identify the distinctive elements of each region’s traditional culture.
Transplant	Cultural traits of some countries are transferred into another product in a direct and somewhat random manner.
Transpose	To emphasise the distinctiveness of regional traditional culture, two different products exchange some of their cultural components.
Transit	The buyer can complete the transitional process of preserving a tourist souvenir design.
Transcribe	Simplified modelling and appearance.
Transform	Simplifying the visual design of a cultural image into varied souvenir forms without losing its core meaning.

In design practice, Peirce’s tripartite framework of signs (icon, index, symbol) offers a concrete pathway for interpreting and constructing the cultural significance of souvenirs. Iconicity manifests in the direct imitation of cultural archetypes through the form of the souvenir, such as using simplified geometric shapes to represent the silhouette of traditional architecture, or employing natural forms to suggest regional characteristics. Indexicality is expressed through physical or causal connections between design elements and their place

of origin or craftsmanship - for instance, the use of locally distinctive materials or the inclusion of information about intangible cultural heritage inheritors, thereby making the product a direct reference to its cultural source. Symbolicity relies on socially and culturally conventionalised meanings, such as the colour red symbolising good fortune in the Chinese context, or dragon patterns representing imperial authority and power. Although these symbols bear no necessary physical connection, they carry stable connotations within collective cultural cognition. By systematically orchestrating these three types of signs, designers can encode abstract cultural meanings into perceptible and interpretable material forms.

2.2.2 Theory of Planned Behaviour

In developing theoretical frameworks for shopping behaviour, many models have been suggested for understanding and predicting consumer purchasing behaviour. Liu et al. (2022) developed a comprehensive shopping behaviour model, exploring how personal traits, situations and product characteristics influence consumers and how shopping behaviour consists of thinking, feeling and acting. Jain et al. (2023) performed empirical studies on the impact of customers' attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control on purchase intention, opening a new view for us to study consumers' purchase behaviour.

Icek Ajzen (1988, 1991) developed the TPB model as a successor to the TRA theory initially proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, 1980). Ajzen found that people do not act entirely on their free will, so he extended the TRA by adding the "Perceived Behavioural Control" variable to develop the TPB model. TPB explains how people actively plan and control their behaviour. Ajzen and his colleagues proposed that human behaviour results from deliberate intention. The TPB model is widely accepted in academia and is one of the

most useful models for analysing or explaining human behaviour patterns (Armitage & Conner, 2001; Han & Stoel, 2017; Alam et al., 2024).

The TPB model is flexible and applicable to researchers to enhance the model's explanatory power by incorporating elements from other theories. Ajzen (1991) described TPB as one of the most useful theories for analysing human behaviour. For example, Yadav and Pathak (2016) applied TPB as a theoretical framework. They extended it by adding environmental concerns and other elements to examine young consumers' purchase intention to buy environmentally friendly products.

This research uses tourists' purchasing intentions and behaviour as the focus, corresponding to the five elements of the TPB model. Using the TPB model, we can better understand how tourists make purchasing decisions and how their behaviour can be predicted and guided by changing attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control.

2.2.2.1 Basic Concepts

TPB has five components (Figure 2.3): attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control, behavioural intention, and behaviour.

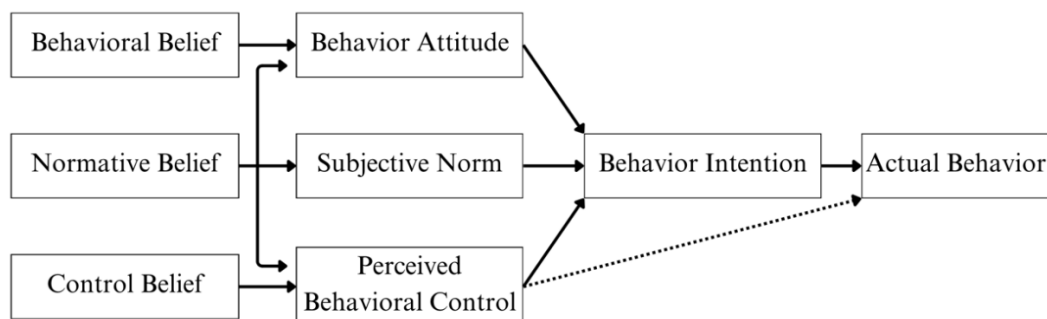


Figure 2.3: TPB Theoretical Framework (Ajzen, 1991)

- **Attitude:** refers to a person's evaluation of a particular behaviour, whether good or bad. It relies on the person's behavioural beliefs about the consequences of his/her behaviour and how he or she evaluates the consequences. The behavioural intention is more likely to happen when the mindset is good rather than bad.
- **Subjective Norm:** describes the pressure people feel from others or social groups about whether or not to engage in a particular behaviour. The person's normative beliefs about what others expect of them determine their motivation to comply with those expectations. The impact of social influence on behavioural intention is reflected in subjective norms.
- **Perceived Behavioural Control:** refers to the degree to which a person believes a behaviour is easy to perform. This is dependent upon the person's confidence in these control factors and control perceptions regarding the behaviour's execution. Perceived control over behaviour can influence intended and actual behaviour, serving as a proxy for actual control.
- **Behavioural Intention:** describes a person's subjective assessment of the likelihood of engaging in a particular behaviour, representing a person's willingness to perform a particular behaviour.
- **Behaviour:** describes a person's actual performance of the behaviour.

TPB identifies three primary variables that determine an individual's "Behavioural intention": attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. These three

variables influence each person's intention regarding their behaviour, which influences their actual behaviour.

According to Ajzen (1991), the intention underlying a behaviour indirectly influences all other factors that can affect behaviour. Three interrelated aspects determine behavioural intention. The first is the individual's "attitude", or how they feel about a specific behaviour; the second is derived from external "subjective norms", or how those norms influence an individual's adoption of a particular behaviour; and the third is derived from perceived behavioural control.

TPB's primary points are as follows:

- Behaviour not entirely under one's volitional control is influenced by behavioural intention and actual control conditions, such as capacity, opportunities, and resources. Behavioural intention directly determines behaviour when actual control conditions are sufficient.
- One can directly predict the likelihood of behaviour occurring using accurate perceived behavioural control as an alternative measure of the actual control conditions. This is because accurate perceived behavioural control corresponds to the actual control conditions. The degree of actual perceived behavioural control determines how accurate a forecast is.
- The three primary factors influencing behavioural intention are perceived behavioural control, behavioural attitude, and subjective norms. Positive attitudes are associated with higher levels of support from important others and

greater perceived behavioural control, which is associated with higher behavioural intention, and vice versa.

- People hold many behavioural beliefs; nevertheless, a comparatively limited number can be activated during a particular timeframe and setting. The emotional and cognitive bases of behavioural attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control are these salient beliefs, also known as 'accessible beliefs'.
- Behavioural attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control are influenced by a variety of individual, social, and cultural factors, including personality, intelligence, experience, age, gender, and cultural background. These factors then influence behavioural beliefs, influencing behavioural intentions and behaviours.
- While behavioural attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control are conceptually distinct, they can occasionally share an underlying belief, making them both independent and interrelated.

The TPB model was first proposed and has since gained popularity as one of social science's most extensively applied theories. Its ability to explain and predict behaviour has made it an instrument of application not only in health psychology and environmental psychology but also in tourism, leisure and hospitality management (TLHM) (Ulker-Demirel & Ciftci, 2020).

2.2.2.2 Application in Different Fields

Due to its high level of adaptability, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) has been widely applied in various research fields. Yadav and Pathak (2016) applied the TPB model as a theoretical framework, integrated environmental concern and other variables into the model, and extended the model to analyse young customers' purchase intention of environmentally friendly products. Applying the TPB model in Yadav and Pathak (2016) shows that the model can be used to predict and analyse consumers' behavioural intentions.

The TPB model is frequently used in tourism and the cultural souvenir purchasing industry to explain and analyse consumers' behavioural intentions and actual behaviour. In the field of tourism, TPB has been applied in analysing tourists' environmental behaviour (Han et al., 2010), destination choice (Lam & Hsu, 2006) and adoption of technological innovations in the tourism industry (Cheng & Cho, 2011). The TPB model is also applied in analysing customers' purchase intention of cultural products (Goh & Jie, 2019) and conflict resolution in cultural heritage tourism (Xiong et al., 2019).

The TPB model is also helpful in predicting choices of travel destinations and sustainable tourism actions, as well as accepting new technology in tourism. According to Kim et al. (2018), components of the TPB model mediate the relationship between digital storytelling and engagement intentions in travel crowdfunding. It offers a novel perspective to explore tourists' consumer behaviour in travel crowdfunding. Swanson and Horridge (2006) emphasised that purchasing motivations drive consumers to purchase cultural memorabilia, which means that tourists want to buy something as a souvenir from their holiday. Perhaps they want to experience the culture, maybe they want to seek the Unique and originality of souvenirs, or maybe they know the memorabilia as a valuable product (Li

et al., 2024). In their study, Li et al. (2024) focus on how residents protect “Gejia batik”, a kind of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), and find that social value, aesthetic value, economic value, historical value and perceived behavioural control significantly affect how residents intend to act.

This research utilises the TPB model to study the behavioural intention of Chinese tourists in acquiring cultural souvenirs. This research explains how tourists’ attitudes towards buying cultural souvenirs, perceived social norms, and perceived control over purchasing behaviour affect their purchase intentions (Alam et al., 2024; Hunter-Jones & Blackburn, 2007).

2.2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study develops a comprehensive theoretical framework integrating Peirce’s semiotic theory and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), as illustrated in Figure 2.4. The core of this integrated framework lies in elucidating a sequential explanatory chain. In the first stage, grounded in Peirce’s semiotic theory, the design features of a souvenir function as the representamen. Tourists interpret these features as pointing to specific cultural meanings and narratives (the object), thereby eliciting an emotional and cognitive interpretant, such as cultural identification or aesthetic appreciation.

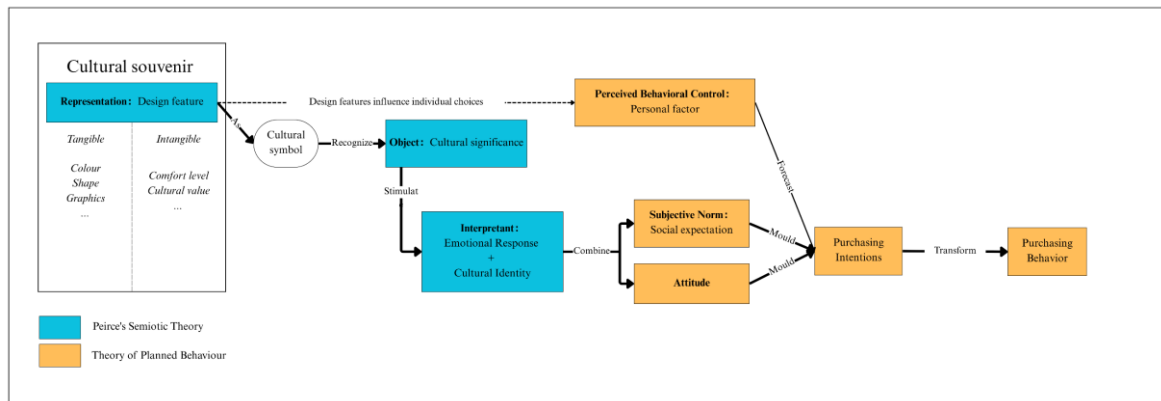


Figure 2.4: Theoretical Framework

This semiotically-driven interpretant forms the foundational input for the TPB's decision-making mechanism. Specifically:

The elicited emotional and cultural responses directly shape tourists' attitude towards the souvenir.

These interpretations can also influence subjective norms, as tourists may perceive the souvenir as meeting social expectations or demonstrating cultural literacy.

Simultaneously, the alignment between the designed cultural meanings (object) and tourists' own resources or understanding can enhance their perceived behavioural control, making the purchase seem more feasible.

Ultimately, these three TPB components collectively determine the behavioural intention to purchase, which leads to the actual purchasing behaviour. Therefore, the two theories are functionally complementary: semiotics explains the "why" behind the affective and cognitive evaluations (the origin of attitudes and norms), while TPB explains the "how" of the subsequent decision-making process.

However, existing research applying these theories in isolation reveals significant limitations that this integrated framework aims to address. Studies employing only semiotic analysis effectively deconstruct symbolic meanings but often fail to trace how these interpretations translate into concrete purchase behaviours. Conversely, research relying solely on TPB tends to treat antecedent variables like attitude as given, lacking depth in exploring their origins in cultural-semiotic decoding. This disciplinary divide has created a theoretical gap between meaning-making and behavioural decision-making.

This integrated framework advances scholarly knowledge by bridging this critical gap. First, it articulates how culturally embedded symbolic meanings are processed into actionable psychological drivers of behaviour. Second, it provides a more holistic model for analysing souvenir purchase intention by tracing the sequential cognitive-emotional-behavioural pathway. Third, it shifts the focus from merely predicting purchase likelihood to explaining the underlying “why”, offering a theoretically grounded rationale: enhancing the semiotic potency of a souvenir directly strengthens the attitudinal foundations upon which purchase intention is built.

2.3 Cultural Souvenirs

The intricate connections between items, people, places, economies, cultures, and ecosystems are all facilitated by souvenirs (Decrop & Masset, 2014; Pritchard & Morgan, 2005). As Hitchcock and Teague (2019) noted, cultural souvenirs serve as a significant means of cultural transmission and as mementoes of travel. They foster cross-cultural dialogue and understanding by bringing a place’s historical narratives and cultural characteristics to a global audience (Qiu et al., 2024).

Naturally, souvenirs, commodities in the commodification of material culture, introduce tourists to the history and culture of a destination (Littrell et al., 1994). Further highlighting the connection between the intention behind souvenirs and the overarching narrative, Mathisen (2020) shows that souvenirs have deeper cultural and historical significance than merely being valuable objects.

In academic circles, there is a general recognition of the role and significance of cultural souvenirs as a means of cultural communication. Most people possess some form of souvenir collection. It is pleasant to be reminded of memorable occasions and experiences. These types of remembrances are souvenirs (Gordon, 1986). In the commerce between travel suppliers and consumers, souvenirs function as commodities (Kong & Chang, 2016; Swanson, 2014; Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Kong and Chang (2016) summarised the significant economic value of souvenirs, which are physical reminders of travel experiences and crucial instruments for social cohesion, economic growth, and cultural transmission. The significance of cultural souvenirs has grown with the expansion of globalisation and cultural tourism; they are now recognised as vital tools for fostering cross-cultural communication and mutual understanding.

2.3.1 Definition and Evolution of Cultural Souvenirs

From a historical perspective, Stanley (2019) and Horner (1993) mention that during the Middle Ages and the Age of Exploration, it was common for tourists to bring back to their home ports large quantities of art and artefacts that they had either purchased, traded, or stolen from the places they had visited and colonised. It is also known that Grand Tour tourists to European art centres in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries purchased miniature copies of the locations they visited (Evans, 1998; Mars & Mars, 2000). Jolliffe

and Smith (2001) claim that many museums were created to showcase the souvenir collections of early explorers and the affluent, making them direct representations of travel. Native American tribes in the United States were urged to create “native souvenirs” for tourists to purchase during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries (McLerran, 2009; Nicks, 1999; Phillips, 1998). This long-standing tradition offers a valuable perspective on the evolution and customs surrounding cultural souvenirs.

Nonetheless these claims, some scholars contend that Christian pilgrimages are where the modern souvenir has its origins, with pilgrims collecting artefacts associated with saints (such as icons, healing objects, and talismans) and holy locations in Rome, Constantinople, and the Holy Land (Houlihan, 2000; Shackley, 2006; Teague, 2000; Tythacott, 2000). To prevent the theft of sacred sites and buildings, keepsakes were made explicitly for pilgrims to acquire; however, the majority of the earliest religious souvenirs were unprocessed fragments of holy places (rocks, dirt, water, leaves, broken sections of churches, and statues) (Evans, 1998).

With an emphasis on the changes in the forms and purposes of traditional arts, early works on souvenirs in tourism studies investigated the development of handicrafts and folk arts as commodities for tourist consumption (Bolabola, 1980; Gormsen, 1981; Graburn, 1976; de Kadt, 1981; Schädler, 1979). In 1986, Beverly Gordon took a significant step by referring to keepsakes as “messengers of the extraordinary” (p. 135), stating that her paper could “serve as a beginning point for serious scholarly consideration of the subject” (p. 145). Over the next three decades, souvenirs have grown in importance in the travel sector and now merit further academic investigation.

A souvenir is defined as “something you buy or keep to help you remember a holiday or special event” or “something you keep or give to remember a special visit or occasion” by the Cambridge Dictionary of Academic Content. They are vital in the tourist experience and act as signifiers of memory (Timothy, 2005).

Souvenir originally derives from the Latin verb “subvenire” (meaning “to come up, come to mind”), which then passed through the Old French verb “(se) souvenir (de)” (meaning “to remember”) (Van den Hoven & Eggen, 2005; Peter & Anandkumar, 2022). It subsequently entered English and gradually evolved into a commonly used noun, explicitly referring to “a physical object used to evoke memory” (Elomba & Yun, 2018). This etymological trajectory reflects the human instinct to preserve memories through material media.

The connotation of “souvenir” is further enriched in the English context by its related terms (memorabilia; memento):

- Memorabilia (from the Latin root *memorabilis*, meaning “worth remembering”) primarily refers to collections related to celebrities or significant events;
- Memento (derived from the Latin *memento*, meaning “to remember”) highlights intimate emotional bonds (Gordon, 1986).

Although “memory preservation” is the primary purpose of both terms, variations in usage contexts demonstrate the cultural diversity and nuanced meanings associated with souvenirs. As a noun in English, a souvenir is an item that serves as a memory aid. In addition to recalling times, places, events, and circumstances, objects may also remind individuals of specific people and experiences. These can be seen as transient (Littrell, 1990), and the

physical souvenir is a concrete materialisation of these moments. Its tangible form helps to identify, define, and frame ephemeral events.

At the academic level, souvenirs have been defined as “a medium of embodied memory” (Littrell, 1990), with their materiality anchoring abstract experiences (such as travel and rituals) into perceptible entities. Earlier research suggests that souvenirs are usable, affordable, easily understood, simple to clean, and portable (Graburn, 1976). Examples commonly referred to as “those items” sold in souvenir shops include “T-shirts, keyrings, pen holders-often engraved with the names of cities, parks, or attractions - or goods sold by local or nomadic vendors (e.g., jewellery, wind chimes, scarves, purses, etc.)” (Lasusa, 2007; Anastasiadou & Vettese, 2019).

Chinese scholars offer similar definitions. Sheng (1983) views souvenirs as a tourism commodity that includes artworks, ornaments, daily necessities, and local products. He suggests that they should possess at least three characteristics (commemorative, artistic, and practical) and three styles (Chinese, national, and regional) (Hu, 1984).

However, “souvenir” can also be defined as “anything that can serve as a symbol of someone’s experience, whether purchased in a shop or not.” Any tangible item that can be removed from a location or event qualifies (Anastasiadou & Vettese, 2019). Formally, it is defined as “an object (i.e., a thing, place, occasion, event, or person) through which something is remembered” (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). This includes objects not typically traded but retained to commemorate personal travel experiences, such as passport or visa stamps, receipts from memorable restaurants, and museum tickets, all as reminders of particular places and moments (Swanson & Timothy, 2012).

Contemporary research has expanded the traditional definition: souvenirs symbolise places, events, individuals, or unique spatiotemporal conditions (Collins-Kreiner & Zins, 2011; Haldrup, 2017; He, 2022). This trend of generalisation aligns with the commodification of memory in postmodern society, where fleeting experiences are translated into lasting cultural capital through material representations (Hume, 2013; Evans, 2019).

Swanson and Timothy (2012) comprehensively explain the various connotations of “souvenir” in tourism literature, as illustrated in Figure 2.5.

The first perspective regards the souvenir as a metaphorical reminder: from the tourist’s point of view, it is a physical representation of an otherwise intangible and fleeting experience, something purchased or discovered during travel. It is often placed thoughtfully in home areas visible to family and guests, as it evokes memories of special places and experiences (Peters, 2011).

The second perspective views souvenirs as commercial tourism products: from the vendor or retailer’s standpoint, souvenirs are commodities sold in craft markets and shops. These products are produced, marketed, and consumed with minimal emotional attachment, possessing exchange value in the marketplace.

“**Mementos**” and “**souvenirs**” are two English terms that relate to the two primary interpretations of commemorative objects. Gordon (1986) provides a comprehensive examination of the distinctions between “mementos” and “souvenirs”:

- “Souvenirs” are objects manufactured and purchased for profit; they resemble tourist commodities.

- “Mementos” are items that hold personal sentimental value and are not typically bought; they are akin to symbolic reminders.

It is important to note that these two terms are not interchangeable. Instead, they enhance our conceptual understanding of the role of souvenirs in tourism studies. While this distinction is meaningful, for This research, “mementos” and “souvenirs” will be treated collectively under the umbrella term souvenirs, as they share a common concrete function on both a structural and associative level.

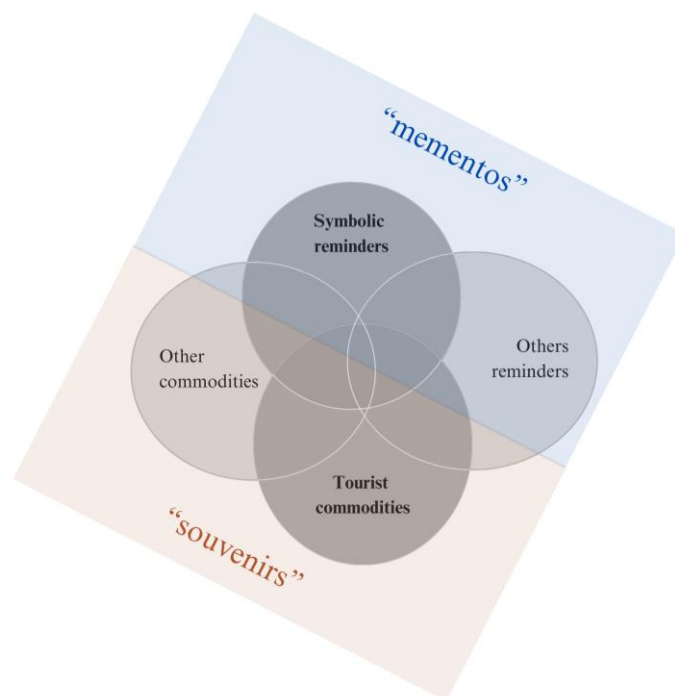


Figure 2.5: Souvenir Taxonomies (Adapted from Swanson & Timothy, 2012)

In summary, souvenirs possess both material and spiritual value and are an expression of culture. They are among the most frequently purchased items by tourists. Souvenirs constitute a significant part of the tourist experience, as commemorative merchandise closely associated with the destination (Wilkins, 2011; Swanson & Timothy, 2012).

Public and academic perceptions of souvenirs can vary widely. tourists often attach considerable importance to souvenirs, viewing them as “intangible mementos or cherished memories” (McKercher & Cros, 2002). However, many scholars argue that souvenirs are often mass-produced, inexpensive, and lack authenticity, suggesting that tourists display a “misleading fascination” with them (Lasusa, 2007).

Understanding the role of cultural souvenirs in the tourism industry begins with a clear definition of what they are. Although academic interpretations vary, it is generally accepted that cultural souvenirs serve as tangible representations of both a destination’s cultural identity and its tourism appeal. According to Wang et al. (2018), cultural souvenirs are items that represent a place’s culture and are typically purchased by tourists as souvenirs of their visit. This definition not only reflects the cultural attributes of souvenirs and their significance to travel but also proposes that the defining feature of souvenirs targeted to tourists is that they represent the places tourists have visited (Duan et al., 2023). High-quality cultural souvenirs can help shape and establish a destination's brand image. This shows that cultural souvenirs are cultural transmitters and impact local perception. Qiuxia et al. (2022) believe that cultural souvenirs can preserve and pass down high-quality local products and, at the same time, promote local economic development.

Furthermore, the definition of cultural souvenirs has transcended the concept of objects to include experiences and stories. Souvenirs are cultural objects that contain traditional customs, social values and political and religious elements (Love & Sheldon, 1998). In addition, Wang (2023) further extends the definition of cultural souvenirs to include digital artworks and some particular tangible products such as handicrafts and local foods. These cultural souvenirs preserve a place’s historical, cultural and social value and

assist in establishing a mental and emotional connection between tourists and the place they visited (Duan et al., 2023; Lv et al., 2024).

According to the above works of scholars, cultural souvenirs can be viewed as unique products with distinctive cultural and emotional attributes and cultural and aesthetic attributes. Their unique design and cultural symbolism allow tourists to form emotional connections with a destination and play a vital role in preserving and disseminating regional culture.

Assortment, referring to the range of stock a retailer offers, is a critical decision that influences consumer choice and purchase behaviour (Kahn, 1999; Simonson, 1999). For cultural souvenirs, an effective assortment must cater to the tourist's desire for a meaningful memento of their experience.

Scholars have proposed diverse classification frameworks to comprehend this variety. Early typologies focused on physical forms and functions, such as Gordon's (1986) categorisation of photographs, local specialities, and symbolic markers. Subsequent research expanded these criteria to include cultural and experiential dimensions. For instance, Swanson and Timothy (2012) proposed a fourfold typology (total, association, living, and pilgrimage souvenirs) that explicitly considers the item's physical form alongside its cultural significance and the emotional bond with the tourist. Similarly, Li et al. (2024) introduced conceptual layers (e.g., "feeling-level", "connotation-level") to capture the multi-dimensional significance of cultural and creative products. A synthesis of these various criteria, including material form, functionality, cultural attributes, and market positioning, is presented in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Historical Research Classification of Cultural Souvenirs

Standard	Type	Description	Example	Reference
Material Form	The sampled	Emphasises natural attributes; elements are used in their original form without human interference.	Seashells, Rocks	Gordon (1986); Hume (2014)
	The crafted	Emphasises handicrafts and other artistic inputs introduced during production, representing features of the destination.	Ceramics, Woven goods, Wood carvings	Gordon (1986); Hume (2014); Littrell et al. (1994); Duan et al. (2023)
	Artwork	Possesses artistic and collectable value.	Paintings, Sculptures, Prints	Gordon (1986); Swanson and Timothy (2012)
	Characteristic Food	Local foods and beverages.	Speciality tea, Local snacks	Duan et al. (2023); Liu et al. (2022); Gordon (1986); Littrell et al. (1994)
	Outfit	Local clothing and accessories.	Scarves, Jewellery	Duan et al. (2023); Littrell et al. (1994); Turner and Reisinger (2001); Asplet and Cooper (2000); Swanson & Horridge (2004)
	Digital product	Digital cultural souvenirs	Digital artworks, Virtual travel experiences	Wang (2023)
Functionality	Souvenir	Mass-produced commercial products that serve as mementos of the trip, representing the location via words, images, or symbols.	Plates, Mugs, Tea towels, Postcards	Gordon (1986); Blundell (1993); Swanson and Timothy (2012); Littrell et al. (1994); Hitchcock (2000); Markwick (2001)

Table 2.4 continued

	Gift	Items given as gifts in cultural exchanges between family and friends.	-	Heung & Cheng (2000); Park (2000)
Cultural Attribute	Traditional Cultural Souvenir	Reflects traditional culture and the historical essence of the destination.	Antiques, Collectables	Michael (2002); Balermipas and Manola (2020); Grado et al. (1997); Swanson and Horridge (2004)
	Modern Cultural Souvenir	Combines modern design with elements of popular culture.	Co-branded products, Fashion merchandise	Lai et al. (2021); Jin (2022)
Market Positioning	Tourist Souvenir	Specifically designed and sold for tourists.	Commonly found at tourist attractions and shops	Swanson and Timothy (2012); Liu et al. (2019)
	Local Handicrafts	Arts and crafts that reflect local cultural characteristics, typically handmade by local artisans.	Usually made by local artisans.	Soukhathammavong and Park (2019); Duan et al. (2023); Turner & Reisinger (2001)
Consumer Demand	Cultural Identity	Souvenirs purchased to express one's cultural identity and self-concept.	-	Balermipas and Manola (2020)
	Experience Demand	Souvenirs bought as part of a meaningful cultural experience to enhance emotional attachment to the journey.	-	Husa (2020); Hitchcock (2013); Hitchcock and Teague (2019)

While these classifications provide a valuable framework for understanding souvenir diversity and its commercial logic, they predominantly focus on tangible attributes and overt functions. This emphasis, however, may inadvertently overlook the intangible, sentimental, and culturally symbolic dimensions that are central to a souvenir's value as a keepsake (Cohen, 1993; Smith & Robinson, 2006). The limitation of such taxonomy is its potential to reduce souvenirs to mere commodities, neglecting their role as vessels of personal memory and cultural identity. This critical gap underscores the necessity for research, such as this study, to look beyond physical categorisation and delve into the underlying design features and perceived authenticity that ultimately shape tourist evaluations and purchase decisions in the context of cultural souvenirs.

However, this evolutionary process of transforming souvenirs from sacred objects into commodities has prompted critical reflection within academia. As noted by Cohen (1988) and Shepherd (2002), cultural souvenirs face the risk of “staged authenticity” amid the wave of commercialisation. To cater to tourists' expectations and the demands of mass production, local cultural symbols are often simplified, standardised, or even distorted, leading to the erosion of their deeper cultural meanings during dissemination. This commodification of “authenticity” creates a tension with the concept of infinite semiosis of the “interpretant” in Peircean semiotic theory: the cultural “object” that designers intend to convey may become superficial and stereotyped in the interpretation of tourists. This critical perspective is crucial to This research, as it reminds us that souvenir design is not merely a simple appropriation of symbols, but a complex undertaking that seeks to balance commercialisation with cultural fidelity.

2.3.2 Role in Tourism

There have been many studies related to cultural souvenirs and tourism. Horner (1993) rationalised that tourists stimulated the need for highly specialised markets to sell mementoes. The rational economic model explains why mass production of tourism art is today. The selling of cultural souvenirs also brings about income for the locals. In Tomok on Samosir Island, cultural souvenirs bring income for many locals (Nainggolan et al., 2022). Swanson and Timothy (2012) stated that tourists' purchase and collection of souvenirs reflect their identity and connection to place and are a significant source of income for local merchants, artisans, and communities. Qiu et al. (2024) also stated that selling souvenirs brings about income for the locals and growth of the related tourism industry.

Cultural souvenirs also serve as representations of a destination's identity and heritage. In the case of Native American tribes, the production of "native souvenirs" was encouraged as a means of generating income and preserving cultural traditions (McLerran, 2009; Phillips & Steiner, 1999). These souvenirs are intrinsically tied to the local way of life, with both their production and consumption reflecting the transmission of cultural values and creativity.

Cultural souvenirs are vital in enhancing tourists' travel experience and satisfaction. As physical tokens of memory, they function as travel markers or keepsakes that help preserve the emotional significance of the journey (Wei, 2018). According to Soukhathammavong and Park (2019), mementoes have become increasingly important parts of the tourist experience and significantly contribute to tourist destinations' revenue.

Souvenirs with a cultural meaning allow for a continuous emotional and symbolic bond between tourists and the places they visit. Through souvenirs, tourists can keep a

connection with the place after they leave. Qiu et al. (2024) refer to souvenirs as the visible traces of cultural tourism, artefacts of a process through which tourists find meaning and culture of places by interacting with local communities.

In a globalised tourism era, souvenirs are tangible memories of intercultural encounters and can provide clues to the global movement of cultural symbols (Cave et al., 2013; Shen & Lai, 2022). Terkenli and Georgoula (2021) argue that culture is the most important and authentic tourism attraction that can be used to develop cultural tourism and local economic development.

The souvenir industry can directly benefit local populations (Connelly-Kirch, 1982; Husa, 2020). Olalere (2019) argues that when indigenous crafts are commercialised, local populations benefit not only from the economic rewards but also because they can provide tourists with more meaningful cultural experiences.

2.3.3 Relationship with Local Culture

Cultural souvenirs are closely connected to local life and can be tangible proof of a place's unique customs, history, and identity. According to Mathisen (2020), the mementoes' role goes beyond that and is part of a broader narrative, where the focus is on the story of the culture. As Hitchcock and Teague (2019) and Qiu et al. (2024) noted, cultural souvenirs function as keepsakes of travel and as important agents of cultural transmission. Embodying and sharing a place's historical narratives and cultural characteristics promote cross-cultural dialogue and foster a deeper global understanding of local traditions.

A notable example is the Emperor Huizong of the Song Dynasty Calligraphy Folding Fan sold by the Palace Museum (see Figure 2.6), which acts as a souvenir and a

representation of traditional Chinese culture. The protection and application of intellectual property rights facilitate the preservation and revitalisation of such cultural heritage (Sawagvudcharee & Yolles, 2019).

	Original Work	Cultural Souvenir
Name	Emperor Huizong (Song Dynasty)'s "Summer Day" calligraphy scroll.	Emperor Huizong of the Song Dynasty Calligraphy Folding Fan
Picture		
Introduction	AD 960–1127 was the Northern Song Dynasty. It is a piece that embodies the Slender Gold. The Slender Gold calligraphy style was developed by Emperor Huizong (Song Dynasty), Zhao Ji (1082–1135).	Price:45RMB Sales volume: 3000+ Dimension: 30.2×54.2CM

Figure 2.6: Emperor Huizong of the Song Dynasty Calligraphy Folding Fan

From the perspective of the destination, souvenirs showcase the unique and valuable aspects of local culture (Ara et al., 2022). The materialisation and commercialisation of local culture represent the dynamic interaction between cultural artefacts and their origins. Souvenirs serve to disseminate culture and reflect its evolution. Mathisen (2020) emphasises that, to ensure the authenticity and cultural sensitivity of souvenirs, the process of designing and producing cultural souvenirs must involve a thorough exploration and understanding of local cultural characteristics.

In addition to their role as cultural messengers, cultural souvenirs symbolise social cohesion. According to Buzilă and Lazăr (2019) and Lu and Qian (2023), souvenirs can make individuals proud of their identity and native culture. Lu and Qian (2023) argue that using symbolic gifts in tourism can strengthen local people's cultural identity and pride. According to Mayuzumi (2022), cultural souvenirs can educate the younger generation to recognise and pass on their culture. The role of souvenirs is vital in a globalised society.

Olalere (2019a) argues that with lifestyle changes induced by the influx of cultural ideas from the globalised world, many cultural artefacts are seen by many as old and out of date. Balermipas and Manola (2020) argue that an in-depth analysis of souvenirs will help to use local artefacts to depict the cultural history and enhance cultural education for youth to define what is 'local' in a meaningful manner.

The significance of cultural souvenirs in tourism cannot be neglected; they are not only reminders of tourists' experiences but also the materialisation and commercialisation of local culture and are powerful means of protecting cultural heritage. Ara et al. (2022) stated that souvenirs represent the culture of a place. Souvenirs are commodities and means of tourists remembering and sharing their travel experiences (Hu & Yu, 2024).

As stated by Mathisen (2020), in developing and designing cultural souvenirs, it is necessary to explore and understand what local culture is for (Mathisen, 2020). For instance, Native American tribes in the US were encouraged to develop "authentic souvenirs" to generate economic activities and were perceived as tools to transmit cultural heritage (McLerran, 2009; Phillips & Steiner, 1999). The souvenirs are mementoes of intangible travelling experiences that bridge individuals and local culture.

Cultural souvenirs play a crucial role in fostering local cultural innovation and transformation. Özgüt et al. (2023) suggest that integrating tradition with modernity and balancing local with global perspectives can contribute to the sustainable development of cultural resources. For example, the Ainu people of northern Japan decorate everyday items with distinctive patterns which, when adapted into souvenirs, are highly popular among tourists, demonstrating both cultural richness and commercial value (Tashi & Ullah, 2019).

Cultural souvenirs are significant as mementoes of travel and as embodiments of cultural heritage. Dresler (2022) argues that souvenirs are meaningful, tangible artefacts, allowing individuals to maintain a physical connection to cherished past experiences while conveying personal and cultural significance. These items transcend the function of simple memorabilia; they represent cultural capital, enabling tourists to preserve memories and share narratives with others.

Tourist destinations often aim to project a specific image to the external world (Sangchumnong & Kozak, 2021; Aïdi & Fabry, 2024). Souvenirs should reflect the character or surroundings of a place. Those that incorporate local features can help tourists acknowledge the significance of a location through the perceived value of the item, contributing to the formation of a destination image (Duan et al., 2023). For example, souvenirs that align with the destination's identity can communicate its "image", and, for individuals who have not yet visited, such items can offer insight into the place and even inspire a desire to travel there.

Cultural souvenirs and local culture are strongly associated, as these souvenirs are often material expressions of a location's distinctive customs, heritage, and identity. Handicrafts and souvenirs made locally aim to reflect culture, enhance authenticity and

facilitate cultural understanding and integration (Chang et al., 2022; Park & Reisinger, 2009). Unlike ordinary products, they are symbols of culture that reflect the local culture, preserve the originality of the place, and attract consumers' attention (Chang et al., 2022). When traditional culture meets modern design, souvenirs become strong symbols of a place's identity, originality and beauty (Qiu et al., 2024).

2.3.4 Market Status

The souvenir industry's growth is stimulated by evolving tourism demand, increasing cultural diversity, and interest in personalised and sustainable products. A comprehensive literature review reveals that the market is at a pivotal juncture, driven by dynamic forces including the post-pandemic recovery, digital transformation, and the integration of culture and tourism.

Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic posed a significant challenge to the tourism and souvenir sectors (Sigala, 2020). However, it also catalysed strategic transformation within China's tourism industry. Current trends indicate a robust recovery, with international tourism reaching 96% of pre-pandemic levels by mid-2024 (UNWTO, 2024d), as visualised in Figure 2.7. This recovery is characterised by a growing preference for domestic travel and staycations (UNWTO, 2024d; CTA, 2022a), a trend reflected in the shrinking travel radii of Chinese holidays (Figure 2.8).

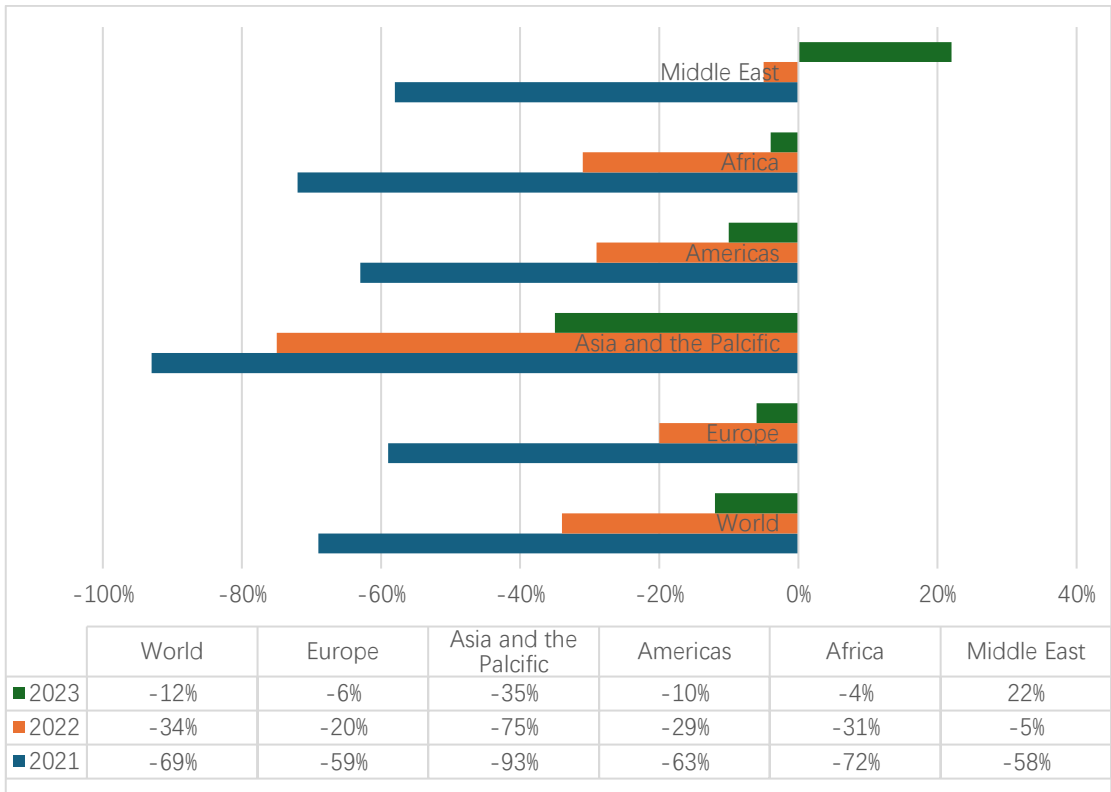


Figure 2.7: International Tourist Arrivals (UNWTO, 2024d)

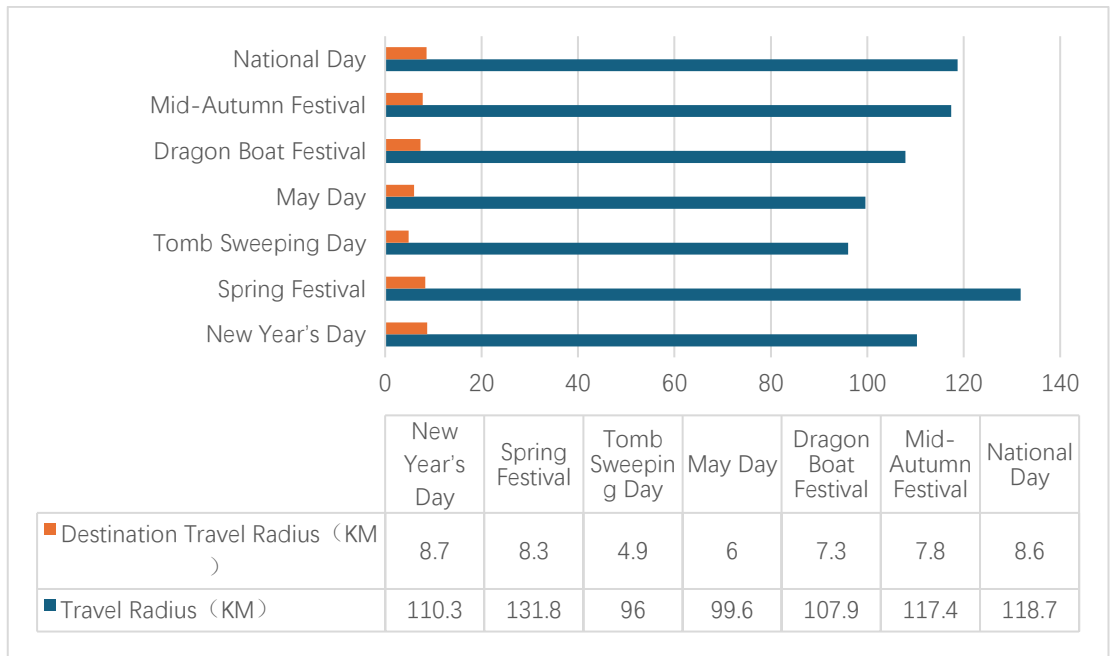


Figure 2.8: 2022 Holiday Travel and Destination Recreation Radius (CTA, 2022a)

From a Chinese perspective, the market demonstrates resilience and structural shifts. While overall per capita cultural expenditure saw a decline, spending on cultural and creative products - including souvenirs - constitutes over 50% of cultural consumption, with the market showing strong growth from 41.35 billion yuan in 2016 to 87.27 billion yuan in 2021 (Figure 2.12; Shen & Zhang, 2017). Official statistics further confirm the steady expansion of the cultural and creative industries, with the design services sub-sector's share increasing from 12.4% in 2018 to 16.4% in 2023 (NBS, 2024a; see Table 2.5). These aggregated data points, summarised in Figures 2.9, 2.10, and 2.11, collectively illustrate a post-2022 recovery trajectory for China's tourism market and the rising economic importance of cultural souvenirs.

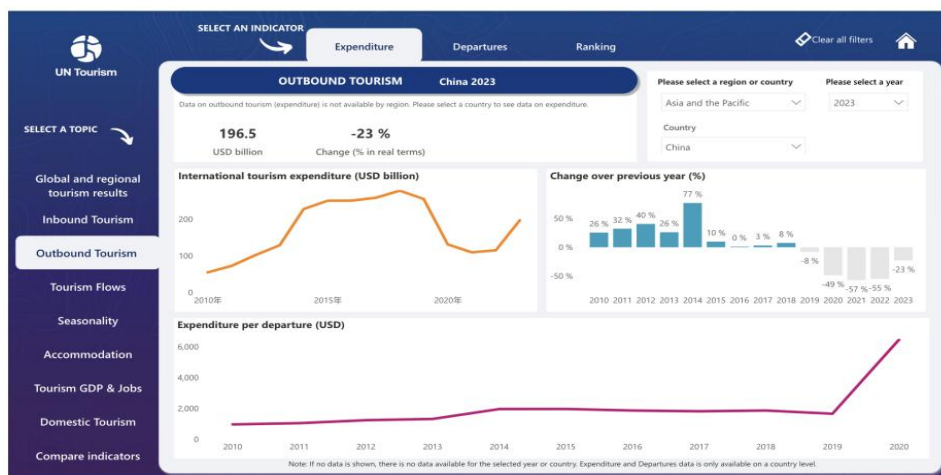


Figure 2.9: 2023 China Tourism Data Dashboard (UNWTO, 2024e)

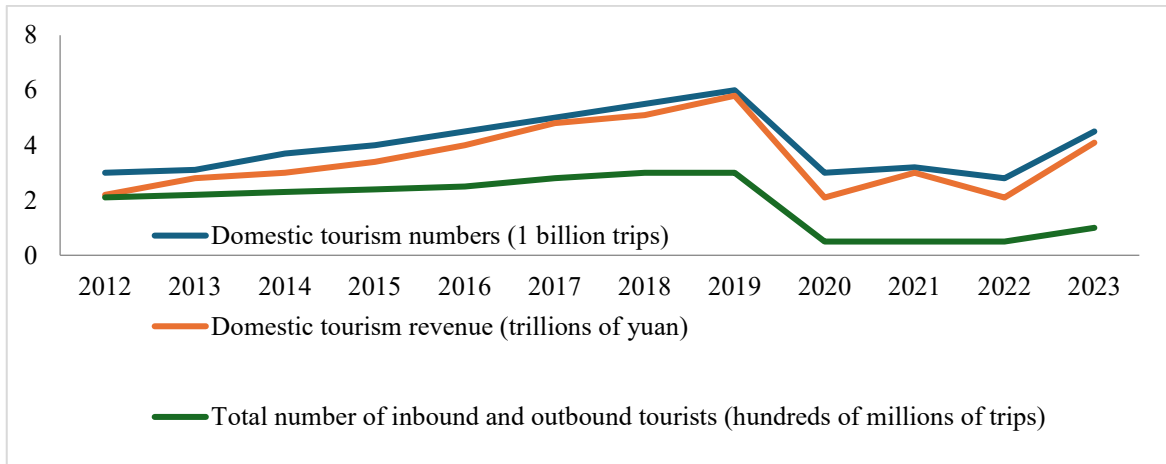


Figure 2.10: 2012-2023 Tourism Market Main Indicator Trends (CTA, 2024b)

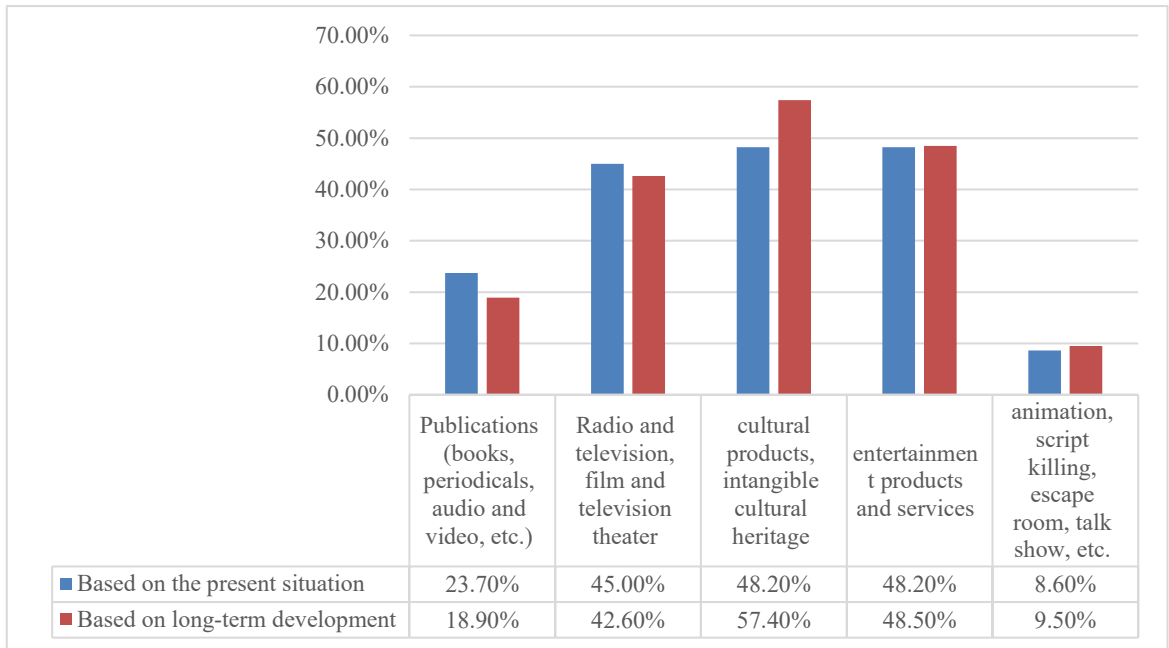


Figure 2.11: Main Areas of Focus in the Domestic Cultural Consumption Market (CTA, 2022)

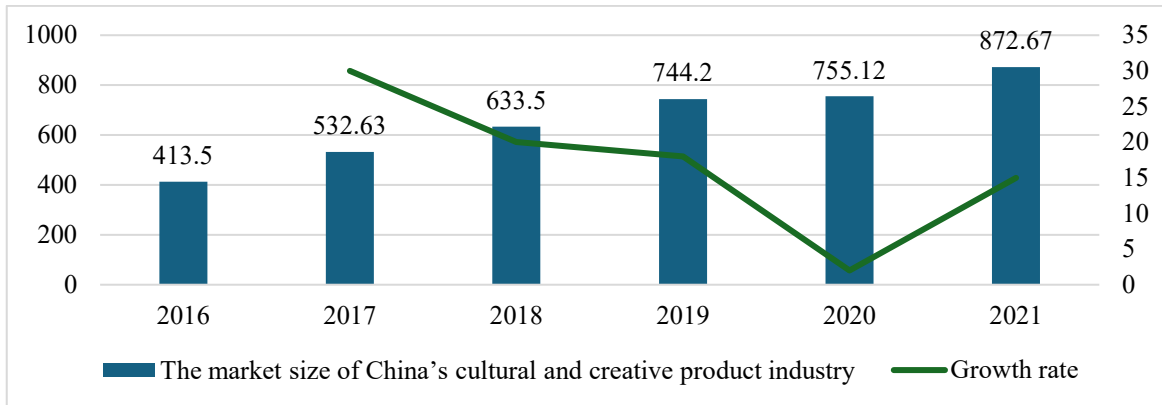


Figure 2.12: 2016-2021 China's CCPI Market Size (Zhiyan Consulting, 2023)

Table 2.5: Summary of Revenue from the Cultural Creativity and Design Services Industry, 2018-2023 (NBS, 2024a)

Year	Absolute Amount (100 million Yuan)	Growth (%)	Total Proportion (%)
2023	21,249	8.7	16.4
2022	19,486	-0.2	16.0
2021	19,565	16.6	16.4
2020	15,645	11.1	15.9
2019	12,276	11.3	14.2
2018	11,069	16.5	12.4

However, this macro-level, quantitative narrative of recovery and growth requires critical scrutiny. While such data effectively outlines market scale and trends, it inherently fails to capture the nuanced heterogeneity of tourist preferences across different segments. More critically, it masks a core market contradiction: the significant expansion in market size has not been matched by a commensurate improvement in the quality, innovation, and cultural authenticity of souvenir products (Maluleem, 2023). The literature's reliance on aggregate data can obscure the very issues of product homogenisation, design superficiality, and the gap between tourist expectations and market offerings that this study seeks to investigate. Therefore, while the macro-trends provide a necessary backdrop of economic potential, they simultaneously highlight the urgent need for micro-level research - such as this study's focus on design features, demographic influences, and perceived authenticity -

to address the qualitative deficits that hinder the sustainable development of the cultural souvenir industry.

Despite a significant increase in the global market size for travel souvenirs, the quality and creativity of products have not kept pace, leading to a market flooded with homogeneous items (Maluleem, 2023; Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Mass-produced souvenirs often fail to embody a destination's cultural values or meet nuanced tourist needs (Duan et al., 2023; Wongtrakul & Dangprapai, 2020).

In the Chinese context, this manifests as standardised products that lack local spirit and depth. Common design approaches, such as stamping place names on generic items or directly reproducing cultural imagery onto everyday goods, are criticised for being superficial and failing to convey authentic cultural heritage (Duan et al., 2023; Maluleem, 2023). Consumer sentiment reflects this critique. A survey by the China Youth Daily Social Survey Centre (CYD, 2022) found that 53.6% of young respondents identified homogenisation as a key issue, with netizens criticising the lack of creativity and the repetitive nature of designs (see Table 2.6 for detailed survey data). This pervasive homogenisation stems from a market-wide tendency to imitate successful trends (Tang, 2023). The case of culturally themed ice cream in China is a prime illustration. While initially innovative when introduced at the Yuyuantan Park Cherry Blossom Festival in 2017, its rapid replication across numerous tourist sites, with only minor shape variations and often significant price increases, turned public appreciation into dissatisfaction (see Table 2.7 for examples). This example encapsulates the core problem: a successful creative concept is reduced to a commodified formula through widespread imitation.

Table 2.6: Cultural and Creative Products Expected Survey (Adapted from CYD, 2022)

Respondent	Proportion	Problems	%	Respondent Expectation	%
00s	30.2%	Homogenization	53.6%	Improve the production process and product quality	76.5%
90s	51.2%	Lack of Practicality	52.6%	Create quality products	76.5%
80s	18.6%	To crudely make	48.7%	Enhance the understanding of traditional culture	60.5%

Note: Proportion of Consent: %

This phenomenon points to deeper, systemic issues beyond mere market imitation. The fundamental drivers are a superficial engagement with culture and a prioritisation of short-term economics over authentic value creation. Designers frequently lack a profound understanding of the underlying cultural narratives, resorting to cliched symbols rather than meaningful interpretation (Tang, 2023). Concurrently, market forces incentivise rapid replication of proven, low-risk models over investing in genuine innovation and cultural depth. Consequently, homogenisation not only dilutes the cultural meaning of souvenirs but also degrades the consumer experience, creating a market devoid of distinctiveness and individuality.

Table 2.7: Summary of Culturally Creative Ice Cream

Ice Cream			Annual price (RMB)			
Locations	Name	Picture	2016	2019	2020	2023
Yuyuantan Park	Cherry Blossom Festival ice cream		15	15	29	35
Temple of Heaven	Hall of Prayer for Good harvest		—	25	30	35
Capital Museum	Boju Ge ice cream		—	—	15	22
Taierzhuang	Ancient city ice cream		—	6	10	10
Qin Shihuang' Mausoleum Site Park	Terra Cotta Warriors ice cream		—	—	19.9	25
West Lake	“Meet on a Broken Bridge”ice cream		—	—	40	40
Badaling Great Wall	Four seasons two-tone ice cream		—	—	—	45

The existing literature consistently identifies this lack of originality as a major challenge. However, critiques often remain at the descriptive level, offering limited analysis of the underlying causes or potential pathways to differentiation across varied cultural contexts. This gap underscores the necessity for research, like the present study, that moves beyond diagnosing homogenisation to analytically examine the specific factors, such as design features, perceived authenticity, and tourist demographics, that can foster greater cultural resonance and diversity in souvenir offerings.

The aforementioned homogenisation phenomenon is a typical example of cultural symbols being “hollowed out” during the commercialisation process. As Mathisen (2020) astutely observes, when cultural symbols are endlessly replicated, stripped of their original social and historical contexts, and reduced to merely decorative elements, souvenirs are diminished from “vehicles of culture” to “empty signifiers.” This not only weakens the tourist's cultural experience but also, from a semiotic perspective, constitutes a failure in cultural transmission. Therefore, the value of this research lies in exploring how design can be used to reinfuse souvenirs with meaningful and interpretable cultural symbols, thereby countering this trend towards homogenisation.

Due to the growing demand for cultural experiences among tourists, the cultural souvenir industry is no longer satisfied with selling goods. However, it is instead committed to offering tourists high-quality cultural experiences. The empirical study of Sthapit et al. (2024) showed that the products’ cultural Unique, value resonance and personal relevance are the primary factors affecting tourists’ purchasing intention. The findings have encouraged the industry to adopt a development trend focused on empowering local culture by thoroughly exploring regional cultural symbols and developing a product system that

integrates emotional connection and the ideals of cultural communication (Swanson & Horridge, 2004).

In China, physical products such as traditional handicrafts and local specialities remain dominant (Swanson & Horridge, 2004). However, virtual souvenirs (such as NFT digital collections) and products arising from the cross-sector integration of “culture + consumption”, fuelled by digital technology, are expanding the industry’s scope. Take the Palace Museum as an example. The “Style of the East” themed make-up series, co-launched with the MAOGEPIN brand (Figure 2.13), not only achieved tens of millions in single-day sales by integrating Ming and Qing design motifs with modern beauty technology but also set a benchmark for the youthful promotion of traditional cultural intellectual property.

Visitors can now innovatively experience culture through digital keepsakes such as augmented reality (AR) tours and virtual exhibitions. Furthermore, sustainable development is increasingly being integrated into creating and consuming souvenirs, with a strong emphasis on preserving cultural heritage and utilising eco-friendly materials. This trend reflects the growing global emphasis on sustainable development. As sustainable tourism continues to expand, so does the production and consumption of cultural souvenirs, with heightened attention given to social responsibility and environmental conservation (Qiu et al., 2024; Budeanu, 2007).

	Eyeshadow Palette	Lipstick
Season 3 (2020)		
	Adorned with genuine pearls, featuring designs inspired by palace hairpins.	Inspired by the Empress's Winter Crown.
Cultural significance.	This Qing Dynasty-themed collection, inspired by Emperor Guangxu's Grand Nuptials, incorporates elements such as pearls, phoenix motifs, and vermilion-gold tones into its cosmetic design.	
Season 5 (2023)		
	Patterns derived from feline motifs in the <i>Qing Imperial Bestiary</i> .	3D-embossed crocodile patterns inspired by the <i>Qing Court Marine Creatures Atlas</i> .
Cultural significance.	Drawing inspiration from Palace Museum motifs, the collection blends the colours of the <i>Album of Flora and Birds</i> with modern techniques, reimagining historical artefacts as youth-oriented makeup in moon-white packaging, thereby revitalising cultural heritage.	

Figure 2.13: MAOGEPIN × Forbidden City co-branded Products

Although the cultural souvenirs sector is entering a golden era of growth, it also faces several significant challenges. Some researchers have begun exploring design solutions for cultural innovation (Cui et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2023). Technological advancement, market demand, and policy support are among the key driving forces behind innovation in the tourism souvenir industry, as Cao and Feng (2019) summarised in Table 2.8. Handicrafts remain among the most important categories of souvenirs. According to *Handicrafts Market: Global Industry Trends, Share, Size, Growth, Opportunities and Forecasts 2019–2024* (IMARC Group, 2019), the global handicrafts market was valued at USD 583.4 billion in 2018.

Table 2.8: Variations of Hierarchy of Effects Models (Cao & Feng, 2019)

Factor	Main performance
Technological development	Emergence of new markets and distinctive market characteristics
Market demand	Strong demand for highly creative cultural products
Policy promotion	Government policies supporting the development of the cultural and creative industries

The research on how the cultural souvenir industry changes shows a growing interest in culturally rich experiences, digital technology and sustainable practices, and the importance of innovation in tackling market challenges. Suhartanto (2018) and Swanson and Horridge (2004) explore the shift towards more meaningful and locally rooted souvenirs. In contrast, Qiu et al. (2024) and Cao and Feng (2019) focus on the influence of technological advancement, market demand, and policy support in fostering innovation. The contributions of Hitchcock and Teague (2000) and Thompson et al. (2012) provided valuable suggestions for producers to improve the quality of souvenirs and their cultural significance.

The studies reviewed in this research share the theme of the changing souvenir market driven by cultural diversity and sustainability. However, their views on innovation differ: some focus on technological innovation and dynamic market forces, while others focus on the importance of cultural identity and transferring artistic value. The methods used in the studies are different: market analysis, consumer surveys, case studies and theoretical discussions. The data from these studies suggested that the market for personalised and sustainable souvenirs is gradually increasing.

2.3.5 Policy Support

2.3.5.1 Policy Guidance

Given the market's growth and challenges, government policies significantly influence the souvenir industry. The following section examines primary initiatives in China. Cao and Feng (2019) found that technological development, market demand, and policy promotion all play an important role in the innovation of tourism-related creative cultural products. The Chinese government has encouraged and supported the development of the creative and cultural sectors through policy. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China (MCPRC) has enhanced top-level design and planning direction, and the Chinese government has introduced multiple policies over the last five years. For example, both "The 14th Five-Year Plan" (refer to Appendix B) and "The National Tourism and Leisure Outline (2022-2030)" provide guidelines to prepare for market formation (see Table 2.9).

The government launched initiatives such as the "100 Fine Routes of the Party's Century of Red Tourism", the "Internet + Tourism" Development Forum, and the "Colourful

Chinese Festival - Fine Products” cultural and tourism trade promotion activities, all of which actively promote the development of tourism and cultural and creative products.

Table 2.9: Key Policies Implemented by China over the Last Five Years

Year	Policy Name	Main Content
2019	Views on Enhancing the Potential for Cultural and Tourism Consumption	Proposes policies and initiatives to boost cultural and tourism-related expenditure
2020	Guiding Principles on Fostering the High-Quality Development of the Cultural and Tourism Sectors	Encourages the high-quality development of the cultural and tourism sectors
2021	14th Five-Year Plan for Cultural and Tourism Development	Sets out the objectives and tasks for the development of culture and tourism during the 14th Five-Year Plan period
2022	Guiding Principles on Promoting the High-Quality Development of Cultural Industry Parks	Promotes the construction of high-quality cultural industry parks
2023	Guidelines for the Development of National Night-Time Cultural and Tourism Consumption Agglomeration Areas; Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Upgrade of Cultural and Tourism Consumption; Domestic Tourism Promotion Plan (2023-2025)	Introduce policies and initiatives to support the development of night-time cultural and tourism consumption hubs, as well as the upgrading of cultural and tourism consumption

The government also encourages the establishment of cultural and creative industrial parks, which serve as primary carriers of cultural heritage. The Chinese government has accelerated the development of new types of cultural enterprises, forms of cultural business, and modes of cultural consumption, supported key cultural enterprises, standardised the development of cultural industrial parks, and promoted the formation of regional cultural industrial belts. Between 2020 and 2023, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism published 34

state-level cultural industry demonstration parks (a comprehensive catalogue is included in Appendix C), laying the groundwork for the cultural souvenir market.

2.3.5.2 Financial Security

The consistent expansion of China’s tourism industry has laid a firm foundation for the cultural souvenirs sector. According to data from the National Bureau of Statistics of the People’s Republic of China, the operating income of firms in cultural and allied industries exceeding authorised size in China is expected to reach 12,951.5 billion yuan in 2023, representing an 8.2% year-on-year increase. The expansion of travel agencies and A-level scenic locations across the country and an increase in tourist arrivals all indicate a favourable trend for the cultural souvenirs industry (Figure 2.14).

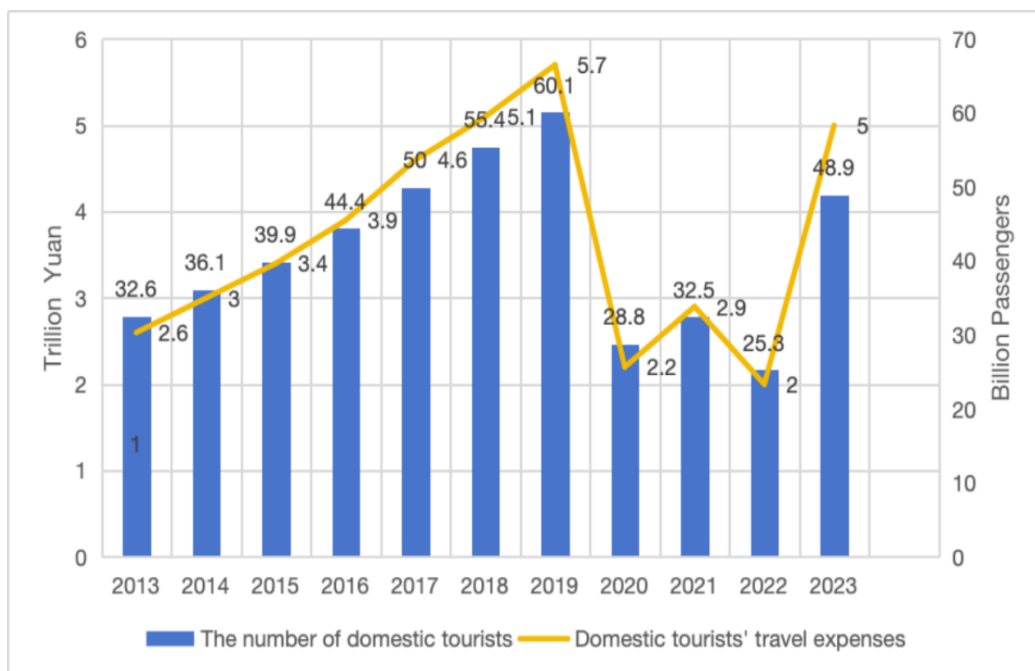


Figure 2.14: Development of Domestic Tourism from 2013 to 2023 (NBS, 2023)

Financial investments have played a vital role in ensuring the growth of the tourism and cultural souvenirs markets. National expenditure on culture and tourism is expected to

reach 128.04 billion yuan in 2023, a 6.5% increase over the previous year (Figure 2.15). This growth demonstrates the government’s commitment to culture and tourism, as evidenced by financial support for cultural souvenir innovation and promotion.

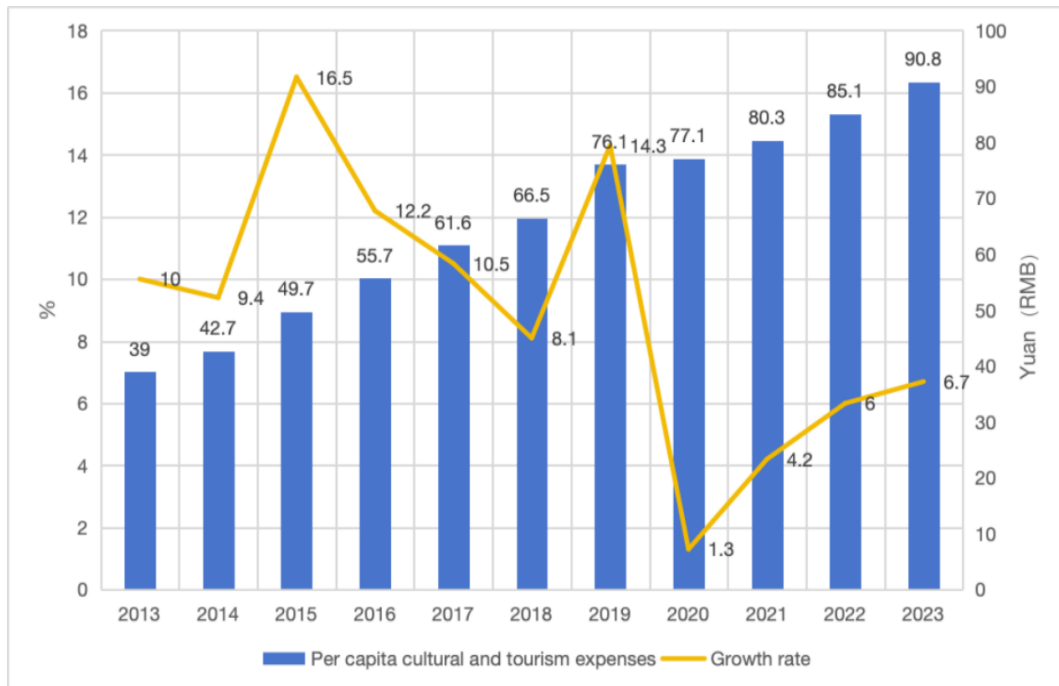


Figure 2.15: Per Capita Cultural and Tourism Expenditure and Growth Rate from 2013 to 2023 (NBS, 2023)

The way cultural and tourism funds are shared fairly at the county level and across the eastern, central, and western regions (Table 2.10) shows the Chinese government’s aim to support equal development in different areas. Cultural and creative items play an essential role in tourism (Gordon, 1986; Suhartanto, 2018; Kuhn, 2020; Cave et al., 2013; Shen & Lai, 2022), and their market is rapidly expanding. The increase from 1,357 cultural and creative-related firms in 2015 to 10,000 by 2021 demonstrates that the cultural and creative market is swiftly developing. Cultural and creative products are tangible evidence of the relationship between tourist participants and a significant component of the global tourism sector.

Experts predict that with policy support and market expansion, cultural and creative items will emerge as a new source of tourism growth.

Table 2.10: Distribution of Cultural and Tourism Expenditure in China (NBS, 2024)

District	Cultural and tourism funds (100 million yuan)	Proportion (%)	Change in proportion from last year (percentage points)
County or higher	597.6	46.7	+1.5
County and below	682.7	53.3	-1.5
Eastern region	560.0	43.7	-1.4
Central region	324.1	25.3	+0.1
Western region	367.4	28.7	+1.4

2.4 Shopping Behaviour Research

Shopping behaviour is generally recognised in tourism and consumer behaviour research as a vital component of the travel experience. According to research, cultural, social, personal, and psychological variables influence customers' purchasing decisions (Durmaz & Gündüz, 2021; Kotler et al., 2003). These elements are frequently outside the marketer's control, but understanding consumer behaviour is essential.

2.4.1 Shopping Behaviour

Shopping behaviour is a multidimensional phenomenon that includes functional, social (Kong & Chang, 2012), and psychological factors. Researchers typically divide cultural souvenir purchasing motivations into functional, social, and psychological categories. Functional motivation concerns the usefulness and quality of keepsakes, social motivation relates to gift-giving and social standing, and psychological motivation refers to personal feeling, identification, and remembrance (Littrell et al., 1992; Styliadis & Terzidou, 2024).

Stylidis and Terzidou (2024) hypothesised that tourists' familiarity with their destination (tourism maturity) influences the meaning and type of mementos they purchase. They discovered that first-time tourists are more likely to purchase inexpensive souvenirs. However, as they become more familiar with the area, they may choose more significant and personally relevant souvenirs, such as handicrafts. Collins-Kreiner and Zins (2011) found that the frequency of travel is negatively correlated with purchasing souvenirs, meaning that tourists who travel more frequently buy fewer souvenirs.

Researchers have mixed perspectives on the key elements influencing buying behaviour. Some emphasise the importance of individual attributes and situational circumstances, whereas others concentrate on product characteristics and socio-cultural surroundings. Lopez-Guzman et al. (2018) discovered that tourist motivation can be summarised into three main dimensions: environment, culture, and convenience, and classified tourists into various groups based on these motivations.

Swanson and Horridge (2006) identified buying reasons as important in motivating consumer purchases of cultural memorabilia, which may include the desire for cultural experiences, the demand for Unique and originality, and the acknowledgement of the worth of memorabilia as a holiday memory. Correia et al. (2013) mention that the primary motive for tourists to choose a destination is awareness of a location's legacy and culture. Hence, the design of cultural tourism products must match tourists' expectations of heritage and cultural knowledge. Dou (2020) stated in his research that Tibetan cultural souvenirs extend far beyond the definition of simple "objects" or commodities. Purchasing cultural souvenirs is a meaningful form of consumption, particularly when the products are religiously themed or based on cultural interpretation. Huang et al. (2024) discovered in an empirical

investigation of handmade Wanxiang souvenirs that the pricing of many handcrafted products varies depending on their production standards. The cheaper ones are standardised, whilst the more expensive ones are handmade. Consequently, the price typically reflects the cultural significance.

Sun (2022) emphasises that tourists require in-depth cultural offerings to enrich their lives. Research has shown that the twin motives of travel and purchase influence buying behaviour (Li & Ryan, 2018; Swanson & Horridge, 2006; Yu & Littrell, 2003). Giving and distributing mementos allows tourists to exhibit status, self-esteem, and pride (Yeung, 2019; Snepenger et al., 2003; Kouhia, 2012).

Prebensen and Foss (2011) perceive tourist experience as a critical component of value creation in the tourist business, emphasising that a gratifying souvenir purchasing experience combined with collaborative innovation creates an unforgettable memory (Andrades & Dimanche, 2018; Rodriguez-Negron, 2024). Ballantyne and Packer's (2016) tourist experience model demonstrates that a positive or joyful experience consists of various factors. In the context of souvenir consumption, more study is needed on specific aspects of souvenir-related tourism experience (Şahin-Yılmaz & Yılmaz, 2025).

Creative tourism opens up new potential for the souvenir sector, which may combine creative experiences in sales, handicraft co-creation, and profound social connection. This approach to buying, which blends creativity and experience, gives tourists a more diverse cultural and social experience, increasing their inclination to purchase souvenirs.

2.4.2 Shopping Behaviour of Chinese Tourists

Current research on Chinese tourists' shopping behaviour often presents polarised perspectives: on one hand emphasising their preference for cheap, mass-produced souvenirs (Winter, 2008), while on the other highlighting their capacity for luxury consumption (Prayag et al., 2015). This apparent contradiction in fact reflects the diversity within the Chinese tourist demographic and the complexity of their behavioural motivations - nuances that are often insufficiently examined in existing studies. In recent years, rapid socio-economic changes in China, particularly the rise of the middle class and the widespread adoption of digital technology, have profoundly reshaped these tourists' consumption psychology. For instance, Wan's (2021) research indicates that the consumption behaviours of newer generations of Chinese tourists (such as Gen Z) are simultaneously influenced by dual trends: "consumption nationalism" (supporting *guócháo* - national wave - culture) and "experiential tourism" (pursuing unique, shareable experiences). Therefore, understanding contemporary Chinese tourists requires situating them within the multidimensional context of economic transformation, technological change, and evolving social values, moving beyond simplistic "cheap versus expensive" dichotomies.

As the world's fastest expanding tourist source market, China's tourists' purchasing habits significantly impact the success of international tourism (Skivalou & Filippidi, 2017). Shopping accounts for a sizeable share of Chinese tourists' outbound trip expenditure (Zhong et al., 2022), which is strongly associated with China's rapid economic development and middle-class rise. More than half of Chinese tourists reported that shopping accounted for the majority of their holiday expenses (Wang et al., 2010), emphasising the importance of shopping in tourism consumption.

China's post-80s, post-90s, and developing middle-class groups have become the primary driving force behind consumption, transforming China's tourism market from a classic mass market to a customised contemporary market (Lin et al., 2021). According to the research, Asian tourists, particularly Chinese tourists, have two distinct souvenir shopping preferences and purchasing habits. Several studies have found that Chinese tourists prefer to buy cheap, small, modern, and mass-produced souvenirs (Winter, 2008; du Cros & Liu, 2013; du Cros, 2013), whereas others show that Chinese tourists are willing to spend a considerable amount of money on luxury goods (Park & Reisinger, 2009; Prayag et al., 2015; Guo et al., 2007).

Winter's (2008) research discovered that Korean, Taiwanese, and Chinese tourists visiting Cambodia choose modern, mass-produced trinkets over traditional or locally crafted handicrafts. Young Chinese tourists like to buy small, low-cost plastic items such as refrigerator magnets and food with patterns. Economic concerns also influence Chinese tourists' purchase decisions. Some prefer to take photos as keepsakes (du Cros & Liu, 2013).

Du Cros' (2013) research in Macau indicated that small, cheap, mass-produced souvenirs such as refrigerator magnets, postcards, key rings, and casino chips are popular with Chinese tourists because they are inexpensive, adorable, and portable (Han, 2018). Furthermore, Chinese and other Asian tourists enjoy the Chinese pastries, rolls, biscuits, and egg tarts featured in World Heritage images. These souvenirs are popular not only because they are global gifts but also because they can be kept and reused, demonstrating that Chinese tourists have a broad range of preferences for low-cost, mass-produced souvenirs.

On the other hand, related research has indicated that Asian tourists, particularly Chinese tourists, are interested in purchasing expensive souvenirs (including luxury

products), which is related to the desire to improve social standing (Park & Reisinger, 2009; Prayag et al., 2015; Correia, 2018; Zhang & Tse, 2018). Due to their high pricing, electronic products and internationally renowned brand goods have become attractive choices for Chinese tourists, since they can provide owners with status and distinction (Guo et al., 2007; Lin, 2017; Yan et al., 2024).

Although current studies have extensively investigated Chinese tourists' purchasing preferences, empirical examination of Chinese tourists' choices for cultural souvenirs, particularly as part of the tourism experience, is still limited. This research need future research to bridge this gap and better understand Chinese tourists' shopping habits and preferences for cultural items.

2.4.2.1 Shopping Motivation

Chinese tourists' motivations for purchasing cultural trinkets are numerous. Based on the studies of Al Mamun et al. (2018) and Ogiemwonyi and Harun (2021), emotional motivation, social motivation and personal motivation are the main reasons Chinese tourists make purchasing decisions. These two reasons are closely related to the personal values of customers, cultural identity and social identity.

Buying souvenirs is common in tourism (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Wilkins (2011) claim that the top three reasons for tourists to buy souvenirs are to give them as gifts, to remember their travel experience and to record their travel (Gordon, 1986; Kim & Littrell, 2001; Littrell et al., 1994; Swanson & Horridge, 2006).

Chang and Tang (2016) found that the biggest motivation for Chinese tourists to buy souvenirs was to give them as gifts to their relatives and friends, and the second was to

remember the tourist destination. In addition, the primary motivations for Chinese tourists to buy cultural souvenirs abroad were curiosity about different cultures, giving gifts to relatives and friends, interest in collecting personal collections, and the pursuit of cultural experience (Peyer et al., 2017; Hung, 2021; Jin et al., 2021). These incentives are affected by personal background, travel experience and socio-cultural context. Peyer et al. (2017) found that when buying overseas, Chinese tourists seek out items that are notably distinct from Chinese culture to increase the sense of experience and commemorative value of travel.

According to the research results of Li and Ryan (2018), the incentive of giving gifts to relatives and friends is powerful, which is the biggest motivation for Chinese tourists to go shopping. Gibson and Connell (2024) found that the main reasons why Chinese tourists believe it is important for them to visit Greece are cultural exchange, escape from convention, prestige, Greek history, the blue and white of the Cyclades Islands, Greek hospitality, archaeological sites and high tourism quality. Gao et al. (2025) found that experiencing culture, expressing personal identity and meeting social requirements were the primary motivations for Chinese tourists to buy cultural souvenirs.

These incentives reflect the consumption psychology of Chinese tourists in the process of buying cultural souvenirs in the context of globalisation. By analysing these factors, This research can know more about the purchasing behaviour of Chinese tourists and give suggestions for the design and marketing of cultural presents.

2.4.2.2 Traditional cultural values

Chinese tourists' preferences for buying cultural souvenirs are influenced by traditional cultural values and modern consumer trends. According to Peyer et al. (2017), some experts believe that Chinese tourists prefer to buy gifts reflecting traditional Chinese

culture as well as the local characteristics of the place, such as silk, porcelain and calligraphy works. They also have a strong interest in buying souvenirs with current design features and new technologies.

Jiangfeng and Nongbunnak (2018) found out that Chinese people like shopping, and shopping usually takes the first place in their holiday itineraries. Additionally, Duan et al.'s (2023) study indicated that Chinese tourists generally focus on their cultural value and creative design rather than price and practicality when purchasing cultural souvenirs. Therefore, the research findings revealed that Chinese tourists' shopping motivation had gone beyond the basic needs and developed towards a new direction, i.e., the pursuit of cultural identity and aesthetics.

It is a convention in Eastern culture to buy gifts for family members and friends. In Japanese culture, this phenomenon is called "omiyage" and is perceived as a way to maintain a balanced relationship and reciprocity (Lin & Mao, 2015; Witkowski & Yamamoto, 1991). As South Korea is culturally very close to Japan, the exact cultural requirement exists in this country, i.e., tourists must bring souvenirs back (Lin & Mao, 2015). This cultural requirement also exists in China. When people go on a trip, it is a tradition to return with a keepsake for friends and family members. This cultural phenomenon is called "hand ceremony".

Han (2018) mention that Chinese tourists buy cultural souvenirs not only for collection interests but also to show off their social status and cultural taste. Many studies have found that Chinese tourists utilise trinkets to determine their social class or improve their social position. Doorne et al. (2003) discovered that Chinese tourists acquire marble in Yunnan as souvenirs or display trophies, implying a middle-class lifestyle (Nyíri, 2011).

Ranasinghe (2016) found that Chinese tourists have a firm purchase intention for black tea and gemstones, which may be due to their rarity in the Chinese market.

2.4.2.3 Influence of “Face”

“Face”, as a social phenomenon, significantly impacts Chinese tourists’ shopping behaviour. Individuals can acquire, lose, or improve their face, which is their image, status, or prominence in the community (Teon, 2017). Goffman (2017) defines face as the sense of establishing positive self-worth to others in relationship and network settings. In the framework of Chinese prosocial culture, face is a key norm that Chinese people adhere to when interacting with others (Hwang, 1987; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998; Zeng, 2024). Chinese individuals have a strong sense of self-image and that of their relatives and colleagues (Chen et al., 2021). Face is a significant social phenomenon in Chinese society, influencing Chinese tourists’ shopping habits (Gao, 2020).

Hu (1944) notes that the Chinese terms “mien and lien” refer to faces. “For this knowledge, the self is always dependent on its external environment” is associated with prestige gained through notable social success and ostentation, tangible achievement in the sense of high academic achievement, other forms of high status, or political power. The more heavily used “mien” is frequently suffixed with “tzu”. On the other hand, “lien” (or occasionally “lian”) denotes the group’s regard for a person who has a solid moral character (Ho, 1976).

Numerous tourism studies have examined how Chinese tourists’ behaviour is influenced by face awareness or prestige. For instance, Kwek and Lee (2015) discovered that the idea of “face” plays a crucial role in the Australian business tourist experience for Chinese nationals. Furthermore, Kwek et al. (2019) investigated face and facework in

Chinese tourists' shopping tours using social interaction. Juan Li and Su (2007) examined the impact of face on the purchasing habits of Chinese and American consumers of luxury products, while Peyer et al. (2017) demonstrated the connection between tourists' behaviour, destination preference, and face. It enhanced the Western notion of ostentatious consumption by incorporating the Eastern concept of face (Veblen, 2005).

Chinese customers typically think purchasing expensive, high-tech, and authentic brands can improve their reputation and bring face (Lin et al., 2013). Purchasing more costly artwork and handicrafts elevates buyers' prestige. People perceive these products as more "authentic" than less expensive ones (Mathisen, 2020). Correia et al. (2018) also discovered that compliance and the need to elevate one's social status are the driving forces behind Chinese tourists' propensity for luxury purchasing. Jiang et al. (2015) concluded that while shopping did not play a significant role in participants' travel motivation, it was still a significant component of their trip since they may look better when they returned home with pricey and exquisite items.

Data from China's most recent 2020 census shows that "Chinese Generation Y" (Gen Y), defined as born between 1980 and 1994, comprises about 22.4% of the country's population (Figure 2.16). This statistic demonstrates the significance of Gen Y in China's socioeconomic structure. As a result, Fyall et al. (2017) focused particularly on this group and discovered that they have a greater propensity for materialism and status consciousness. Gen Y thinks that they can raise their social standing by purchasing well-known brands, which are frequently linked to success, status, and money. This consumption behaviour reflects Gen Y's ideals and significantly influences market trends and economic orientation, mainly because of their substantial representation in the Chinese population. The definition

of Hu (1944) suggests that Chinese tourists' ostentatious shopping behaviour can be explained by their face.

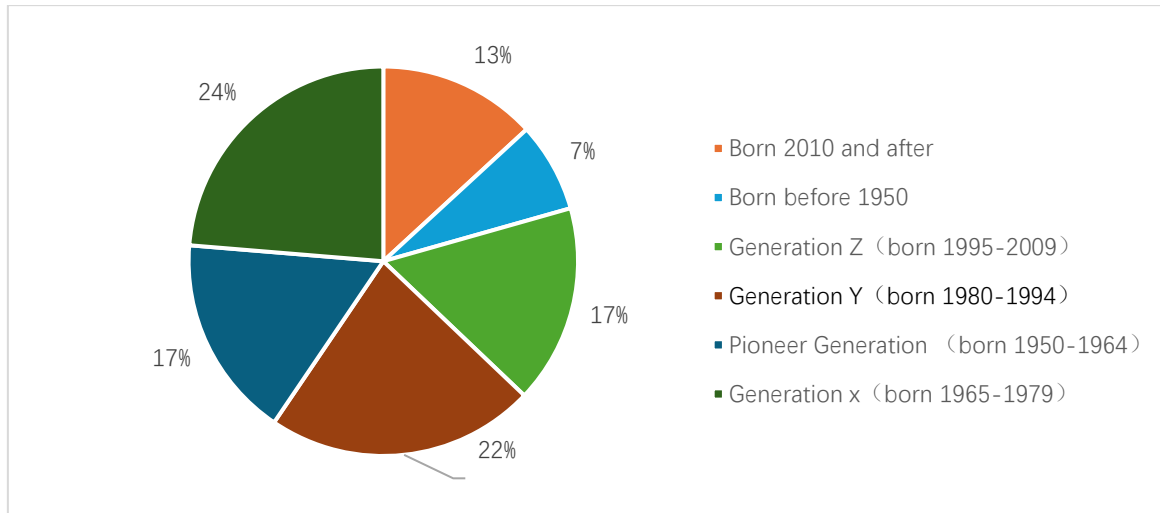


Figure 2.16: Distribution of Resident Population in China in 2020, by Generation (NBS, 2021)

2.4.3 Impact of Digital Technology

The advancement of digital technology is having a significant impact on how Chinese tourist's shop. Big data, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, augmented reality, "3S" technology, and smart tourism are examples of digital technologies that are heavily used in many facets of social life in today's society and have positively impacted the growth and marketing of tourism (Musa et al., 2022).

2.4.3.1 Digital Cultural Souvenirs

With the rapid development of digital technology, China's digital cultural souvenirs business is expanding rapidly. Digital technology lets consumers preview and enjoy mementos in a virtual environment, considerably improving purchasing convenience and satisfaction (dos Santos et al., 2021). For example, in 2024, the National Museum of China

sold 2,300 “AR Phoenix Hood Refrigerator Stickers” within two hours of their release (see Appendix E), demonstrating the popularity of digital cultural souvenirs and consumers’ desire for new purchasing experiences.

Online virtual products are gradually becoming the new favourites in collecting digital cultural relics. Mantas et al. (2021) extensively examined the concept of digital mementos in their research and demonstrated the potential applications of NFT (Non-Fungible Token) technology in this field. A novel digital memento generation procedure, the dynamic postcard (see Figure 2.17), is offered. This approach generates new ideas for designing and producing digital cultural relics and opens up new avenues for using NFT technology.

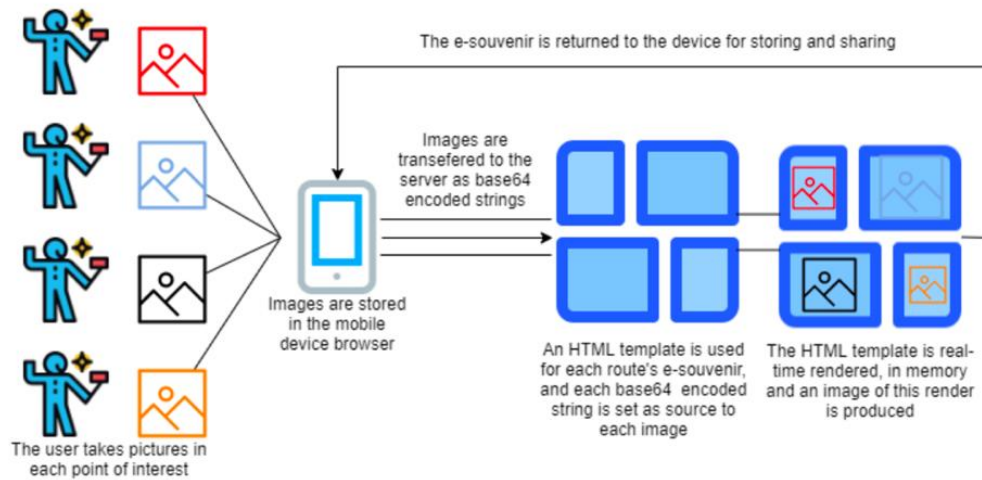


Figure 2.17: Transformation Flow and e-souvenir Creation (Mantas et al., 2021)

In particular, when the NFT digital collection “Bing DwenDwen”, the officially authorised mascot of the Beijing Winter Olympics by the International Olympic Committee, was launched in February 2022, it sold out rapidly on the nWayPlay platform, and its transaction price in the second-hand market increased by nearly 1,000 times (see Figure

2.18). This phenomenon indicates the financial potential and appeal of digital cultural artefacts.

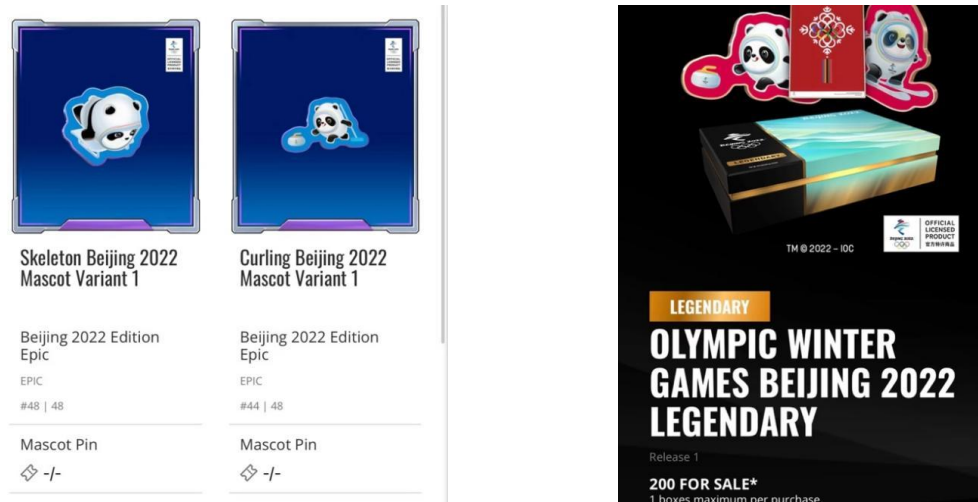


Figure 2.18: nWayPlay’s Beijing Winter Olympics Mascot “Bing DwenDwen” NFT

Mezei and Lapatoura (2024) investigate the function of NFTs in digital cultural artefacts, paying special attention to the potential influence on cultural heritage preservation following the collapse of the NFT market. They discussed the positive function of NFTs in the museum experience, namely how tourists can manufacture unique digital keepsakes in the actual museum space as part of their “museum experience” through the “live minting” technique. Liddell (2023) views “live casting” as a developing trend in exhibition design, with tourists able to cast NFT items at displays. This method gives tourists a novel experience and strengthens their emotional connection to the NFT by ensuring their ownership of the keepsakes via blockchain technology.

Some researchers have investigated the notion of metaverse tourism (Narin, 2021; Go & Kang, 2023). Go and Kang (2023) define meta-cosmic tourism as “a travel product or experience that is enhanced through collective spatial environments and multi-sensory

information processing in the fusion of physical and virtual environments.” This developing type of tourism opens up new opportunities for designing and creating digital cultural souvenirs, particularly in light of the UNWTO Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They emphasised that digital cultural souvenirs and meta-cosmic tourism products can supplement traditional tourism souvenirs, increasing tourist destination profitability by providing remote consumable experiences while reducing direct contact with natural and cultural resources and the human footprint.

Go and Kang (2023) continue to explore the metaverse, describing it as a digital parallel world that opens up new options for designing, fabricating, and distributing memorabilia. Virtual worlds like Second Life (SL) have created economic systems with independent currencies like the Linden Dollar, implying that autonomous economic activity and value exchange systems are possible within the metaverse. The Swedish government’s decision to build an embassy in Second Life demonstrates that the metaverse is more than just a site for economic activity; it is also a space for government and cultural institutions to participate, providing a new platform for souvenir production and distribution.

Metaverse’s ability to connect with virtual teams in social and technical ways and how these abilities affect virtual projects are topics worth investigating further (Owens et al., 2011). Furthermore, the inventive and reflective consequences of metaverse services, which include life records, mirror worlds, augmented reality, and virtual worlds (Lee et al., 2011), may require novel methods of souvenir distribution. Bourlakis et al. (2009) investigated the evolution of retail space in the metaverse and proposed a new business model for memento issues. Hassouneh and Brengman (2015) developed a methodology for studying shopper behaviour in virtual store environments and aspects influencing metaverse retailers’

performance. Virtual store typology based on atmospheric classification provides a theoretical basis for creating virtual souvenirs.

Zhiyan Consulting’s report (Figure 2.19) shows that cultural and tourism digital collections are among the top four most popular product categories in China’s digital collection industry, and consumption of national cultural and tourism collection products has increased significantly (Zhiyan Consulting, 2023). This demonstrates that, with the help of national policies, the cultural industry is accelerating the development of digital information methods with the real economy, such as the tourism industry, and that the digital transformation of the national cultural and tourism industries has become the norm.

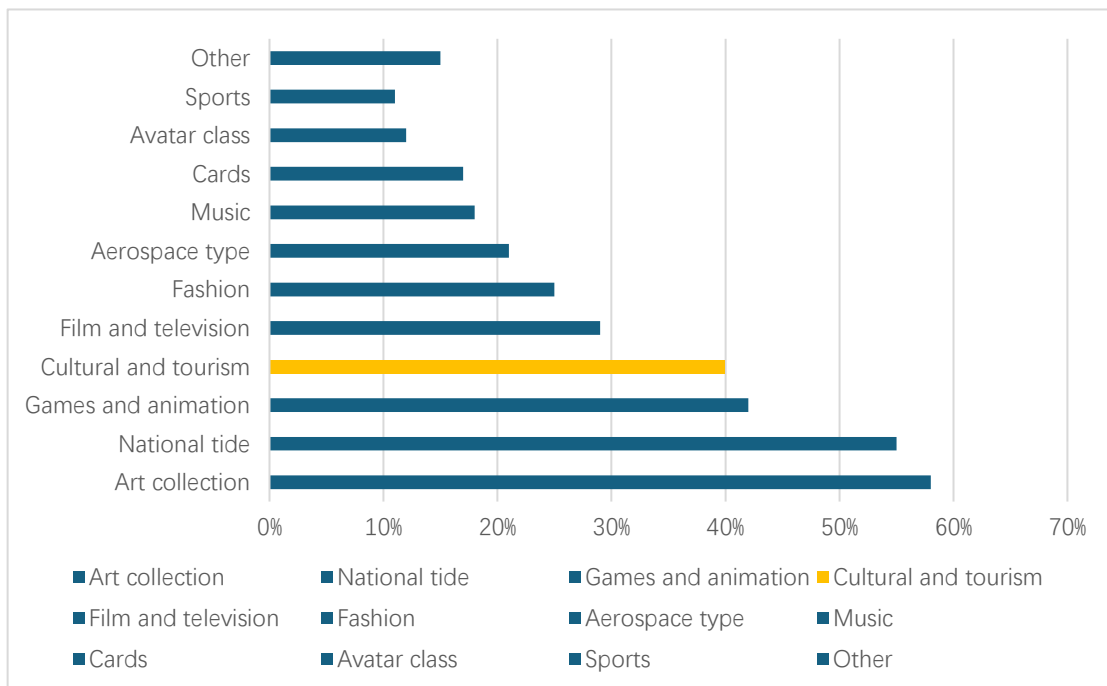


Figure 2.19: Market Heat of Digital Collection Classification in the First Half of 2023 (Zhiyan Consulting, 2023)

According to the extant research, the rise of meta-tourism has surely revitalised digital cultural souvenirs' design, fabrication, and dissemination. Studies have shown that by combining physical and virtual products, digital cultural souvenirs can improve tourists’

spatial experiences and open up new revenue channels for tourist destinations, all while protecting and promoting the achievement of sustainable tourism development goals (Mantas et al., 2021).

However, most existing studies focus on demonstrating technology's potential, while market acceptance, economic benefits, and long-term viability of digital cultural souvenirs are rarely thoroughly examined. Furthermore, various authors' understandings and uses of meta-cosmic tourism vary, affecting the universality and applicability of the research findings to some extent.

A main gap in the current literature is the absence of systematic research on the adaptation and influence of digital cultural souvenirs in several cultural and market contexts, which can be addressed in the future.

2.4.3.2 Digital Payment

The advancement of digital technology has had a notable impact on the purchasing habits of Chinese tourists. Consumers can more easily get information, compare items, and make purchases because of the widespread use of mobile devices and the Internet (Piotrowicz & Cuthbertson, 2014; Rodríguez-Torrico et al., 2020). As indicated through the research done by Duan et al. (2024), social media and e-commerce websites are becoming increasingly important as a resource for Chinese tourists searching for information regarding and purchasing cultural souvenirs. The user evaluations and recommendations on social media sites considerably affect consumers' buying decisions regarding what to buy. Customers often consult the opinions and experiences of other users before making a purchase, and the positive or negative feedback obtained from this information can significantly affect the purchase propensity of consumers.

The pricing of goods and services is gradually changing due to digital technology such as artificial intelligence (Chen et al., 2021). Artificial intelligence (AI) can change prices in real-time and use individual customer information, such as past purchases, location, preferred products, etc., to predict buying behaviour and implement customised pricing strategies (Hufnagel et al., 2022). In addition, the development of contemporary technology opens up new opportunities for the digital revolution of the modern tourism industry; travel agencies promote travel destinations and items through live broadcasting (Deng et al., 2021).

The development of digital technology affects consumers' purchasing behaviour by making shopping more convenient and information easier to collect (Sun et al., 2024). As Kumar and Lata (2022) indicated, offering personalised recommendations and improving consumers' experience are two ways digital technology affects consumers' purchasing behaviour. Chinese tourists find it easier to gather information, weigh options, and complete transactions when purchasing cultural souvenirs due to the rapid advancement of digital technology (Akbar et al., 2016). By improving the shopping experience (virtual try-ons, augmented reality displays, etc.) and offering tailored recommendations, digital technologies also influence consumers' purchase decisions (Hoffmann & Akbar, 2023).

Verhagen and van Dolen (2011) investigated how consumers' opinions of online stores affected their impulse online purchases and discovered that user experience, product information presentation, and website design all impacted their selections. The ease of mobile payments and quick access to trip information may have increased Chinese tourists' spending habits.

Chinese consumers have been drawn to Thai merchants such as dining establishments, retail centres, duty-free stores, and convenience stores, and an increasing

number of Thai commercial banks have joined forces with them as lenders. Alipay is the primary online payment method for buying gemstones in Thailand (Jiangfeng & Nongbunnak, 2018). This eliminates the need to exchange money when visiting Thailand. For Chinese tourists, purchasing souvenirs in Thailand is highly convenient.

There are many ways that digital technology affects how people purchase, such as by offering easier payment options, improving the shopping experience, and making personalised recommendations. These modifications have a significant impact on the direction that the tourism industry, as well as on customers' decision-making processes when it comes to shopping.

2.4.4 Impact of Social Platforms

Social media platforms are having an increasingly significant impact on how people shop. Social media is defined by Kietzmann et al. (2011) as “an interactive computer-mediated technology that facilitates the creation or sharing of information, ideas, professional interests, and other forms of expression through virtual communities and networks.” Social media refers to the social media that individuals use and accept during their leisure time. As social media becomes more widely used, its impact on the economy, society, and travel is growing (Sigala & Gretzel, 2017; Kavoura & Kefallonitis, 2019; Varga & Gabor, 2021). According to data, there are more than 1.067 billion Internet users in China, and the country's Internet penetration rate is 75.6%. Of these users, 95.13% are social media users (Figure 2.20).

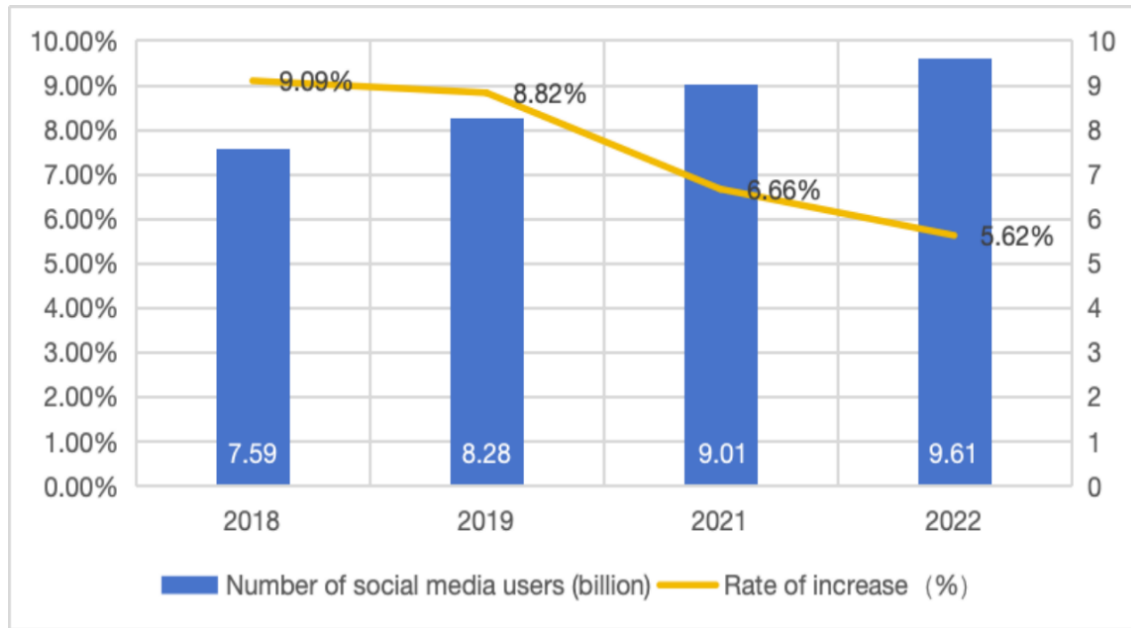


Figure 2.20: Social Media User Growth in China, 2018-2022 (KAWO, 2023)

Since the COVID-19 epidemic, the tourism sector has experienced profound changes (Sigala, 2020). Online buying and virtual travel are becoming increasingly popular among consumers (Donthu & Gustafsson, 2020; Sigala, 2020). In addition to gaining diverse features like e-commerce and search engines, social media retains its social aspects. Retailers of souvenirs can find new opportunities as a consequence of online consumption patterns (Shen & Lai, 2022).






Social media has an important role in Chinese tourists' shopping habits. Consumers learn about cultural relics, exchange purchasing experiences, and are influenced by their social circles via social media platforms such as WeChat and Weibo (Hoffmann & Akbar, 2023). These platforms allow for information exchange and serve as a stage for individuals to express their unique identity and lifestyle. A notable example is the Chinese plush toy souvenirs similar to "Jellycat" that became popular nationwide in 2024 via sites like TikTok and Redbook (see Appendix J). As a result, interactions and content on social media

platforms substantially impact customer purchasing motivations and decisions (Kim & Drumwright, 2016; Kwahk & Kim, 2017). Yadav et al. (2024) discovered that brand contact and user involvement on social platforms considerably influenced customer purchasing decisions.

Cheung and Lee (2012) found that the spread of electronic word-of-mouth on online consumer opinion platforms significantly influences customer purchasing decisions (Zhao et al., 2020). For Chinese tourists, recommendations and ratings on social media sites such as WeChat and Weibo can considerably impact their purchasing decisions for cultural souvenirs. Russell et al. (2021) investigated the potential impact of social media photo sharing on souvenir purchase behaviour, concluding that social media marketing can be especially beneficial for those interested in sustainable tourism, as some motivations for purchasing souvenirs overlap with tourists' motivations for sharing travel experiences (for example, uploading travel photos). Consequently, the use of social media will affect tourists' souvenir purchasing habits by offering an appealing way for tourists to share travel images (Boley et al., 2013; Torabian & Arai, 2016).

Monthly active users of popular Chinese social media platforms, including WeChat, TikTok, Weibo, Kuaishou, and LittleRedBook, are listed in the 2023 Guide to China's Social Media Platforms (KAWO, 2023). This research lists the social media sites and their potential influencing mechanisms that could impact tourists' purchases of souvenirs in China (Table 2.11). Table 2.11 illustrates how various content and engagement methods on these social platforms influence Chinese tourists' purchasing behaviour about souvenirs. Additionally, interaction with social platforms and their content significantly affects customers' shopping motivation and decision-making.

Table 2.11: Summary of Chinese Social Platforms (KAWO, 2023)

Logo	Social Platform	Influence Mode
	WeChat	Using official accounts, search functions, video channels, and other content keywords influences customers' purchasing decisions.
	TikTok (Chinese version)	Influences customer purchasing behaviour with the “FACT+” global business technique and interest-based e-commerce.
	Weibo	Influences customers' selection of mementoes by serving as a platform for thematic marketing strategies and viral communication.
	Kuaishou	Influences customers' purchasing decisions by utilising short videos, community culture, and other content keywords.
	LittleRedBook (RED)	Influences consumer purchasing behaviour by offering tools such as paid marketing, user insights into six industries, and consumer decision-making support.

In conclusion, social media platforms have a wide range of effects on consumer behaviour in purchasing, such as offering convenient payment options, improving their overall shopping experience, and providing personalised recommendations. These changes have a considerable impact on the direction of the tourism industry and customers' decision-making processes when shopping.

In the post-pandemic era, Chinese social media platforms have evolved into core arenas driving consumption. The “interest-driven e-commerce” model prevalent on platforms such as Douyin has significantly stimulated the consumption potential for cultural and creative products among users through live streaming and short-form video content. Recent research has begun to focus on this trend, noting that novel souvenirs integrating digital technology, national wave culture, and social interaction, such as digital collectables, are rapidly gaining favour among younger Chinese tourists who seek experiential value and

identity expression (Li et al., 2023). This trend signifies that souvenir marketing has entered a new phase emphasising instant interaction, emotional resonance, and social sharing, thereby presenting a fresh supplement to traditional theories of shopping behaviour.

2.4.5 Critical Synthesis of Shopping Behaviour Literature

A review of the existing literature on shopping behaviour, particularly that of Chinese tourists, reveals several distinct characteristics and limitations in this field of research. Firstly, in terms of research perspective, the majority of the literature is more descriptive than explanatory. Whilst it has successfully documented the high proportion of shopping within tourism expenditure (Wang et al., 2010) and the dual preferences of Chinese tourists for both cheap souvenirs and luxury goods (Winter, 2008; Prayag et al., 2015), it lacks an integrated theoretical explanation for the underlying motivations behind this apparent contradiction.

Secondly, concerning the subject of research, there is a tendency towards static generalisations rather than dynamic analysis. Many studies treat “Chinese tourists” as a homogeneous group, failing to adequately account for the transformative impact of generational succession (such as the rise of Generation Z), income stratification, and digital lifestyles (e.g., social commerce, live-stream shopping) on their consumer decision-making models. This has rendered some earlier conclusions less effective in explaining contemporary tourist behaviour.

Finally, regarding research content, the interconnected mechanisms between various factors remain unclear. Although the literature separately identifies the influence of factors such as cultural values (e.g., face), socio-demographic variables, and digital technology, how these factors interact and ultimately influence the purchase decision for culturally designed souvenirs within a unified theoretical framework (such as the TPB) remains a black box.

Therefore, the necessity of This research lies in moving beyond a mere description of shopping phenomena to explain how design factors, through interaction with individual factors and internal psychological mechanisms (such as perceived authenticity), ultimately drive the purchase intention of Chinese tourists, thereby bridging the knowledge gap from the what to the why.

2.5 Factors Affecting Purchasing Decisions

A purchasing decision is when a consumer decides to buy a product after analysing the product's facts and information following an in-person examination (Kotler & Keller, 2016). The purchase decision is considered consumer behaviour, a process and action in which a person searches for, buys, uses, evaluates, and chooses goods and services (Jernsittiparsert, 2019). Kotler et al. (2003) suggest that the buyer's decision-making process encompasses five steps: Need Recognition, Information Search, Evaluation of Alternatives, Purchase Decision, and Post-purchase.

Foxall (2005) focuses on various factors influencing purchasing behaviour to simplify these connections. Foxall emphasises recognising individual differences in the decision-making process and elements of social structure. Gibert (1991) contends that there are two levels of influence on consumers. The first level is close to the individual and includes psychological factors such as perception and learning. The second level includes those acquired throughout socialisation, such as reference groups and families (Horner & Swarbrooke, 2020).

According to the research of the above scholars, the importance of investigating the influencing factors of decision-making is largely self-evident. To investigate the decision-

making factors of Chinese tourists purchasing cultural souvenirs, it is necessary to understand the choices made by the target group.

2.5.1 Particularity of Cultural Souvenirs

The purchase decision for a cultural souvenir transcends the functional considerations of ordinary goods; it constitutes a complex process integrating functional, emotional, cultural, and social values (Guo & Zhu, 2023; Kour & Manna, 2024). Its distinctiveness is rooted in its multiple identities as a symbol of travel memories, a vehicle for cultural identity, and a medium for social interaction (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). The following discussion will accordingly focus on three core dimensions: the cultural factors and cultural identity that shape its meaning, the craftsmanship attributes that determine its value, and the materials and production processes that embody its tangible quality.

2.5.1.1 Cultural Factors

Cultural characteristics are widely recognised as major determinants influencing consumers' decisions to purchase cultural souvenirs. According to Zhu et al. (2023), cultural background, values, traditional customs, and belief systems heavily influence consumer purchasing behaviour. Incorporating cultural components makes souvenirs more appealing and meets consumers' cultural experience and identity aspirations.

Purchasing souvenirs as gifts for relatives and friends is a deeply ingrained cultural practice in China known as the “accompanying hand ceremony”. According to the Taiwan Dictionary, “hand ceremony” comes from the Qing Dynasty’s Taiwanese language and refers to local specialities or modest presents given to family and friends upon their return after a journey. This custom represents the rich history of Chinese etiquette culture. The tradition of gift-giving dates back to the pre-Qin dynasty, as documented in Zuo Zhuan –

Duke Zhuang's 24th year. This practice has significant implications for souvenir marketing in modern tourism.

Shopping-related tourism behaviours also allow tourists to connect with the local culture. Tosun et al. (2007) observed that cultural souvenirs, particularly handicrafts, might represent local culture. Cohen (1986) emphasised the importance of these keepsakes in expressing aspects of indigenous culture. Swanson and Horridge (2006) discovered that gifts symbolising the destination's culture and history are more likely to raise tourists' purchasing intentions. The evidence suggests that cultural aspects such as local traits, national styles, crafts, and materials influence tourists' purchase of cultural souvenirs (Park, 2000; AlDabbagh, 2019).

Cultural myths, legends, and religious and philosophical factors influence consumers' choices. Zhu et al. (2023) Consumers' preference for keepsakes lies in the cultural meanings attached to them and their connection to personal experiences rather than their material value. Littrell's (1992) research results also supported this idea.

China's rich cultural legacy provides distinctive materials for souvenir creation. UNESCO has recognised 43 masterpieces of China's oral and intangible heritage of humanity, demonstrating Chinese culture's global influence. For example, Suzhou, Hangzhou, and Jingdezhen were declared "Capitals of Handicrafts and Folk Arts" in 2014 due to their dominance in handicrafts and folk arts, setting the framework for global recognition for Chinese handicrafts.

The successful scenario illustrated by the "Forbidden City Cultural Souvenir" demonstrates the importance of cultural influences in consumer purchase decisions. In 2008, the Palace Museum collaborated with Alibaba to develop cultural souvenirs such as the

“Travel with Authorisation” luggage tag and “I Miss You Too” folding fans (Figure 2.21), which successfully merged traditional components with modern aesthetics and were favourably appreciated by consumers. In 2019, products such as lipstick and “*First Snow*” (Figure 2.22), launched by the Palace Museum, became benchmarks of cultural souvenirs, reviving traditional culture and souvenir sales. These design advances are linked to the Palace Museum designers’ theoretical product matrix (Figure 2.23). This phenomenon is consistent with Swanson and Horridge’s (2006) discovery that keepsakes representing trip experiences are more appealing.



“Travel with authorization”
Luggage tag



“I Miss You Too”
Folding fan

Figure 2.21: The Palace Museum Cultural Creation in 2008 Exploded Souvenirs



Palace Museum lipstick

“First snow” Seasoning Jar

Figure 2.22: The Palace Museum’s 2019 Popular Souvenir

In short, cultural influences significantly impact customer purchasing decisions by shaping aesthetic preferences for keepsake design, interpretations of cultural symbols, and resonance with product narratives. In the future, combining traditional elements with modern design will remain a key topic in introducing cultural souvenirs.

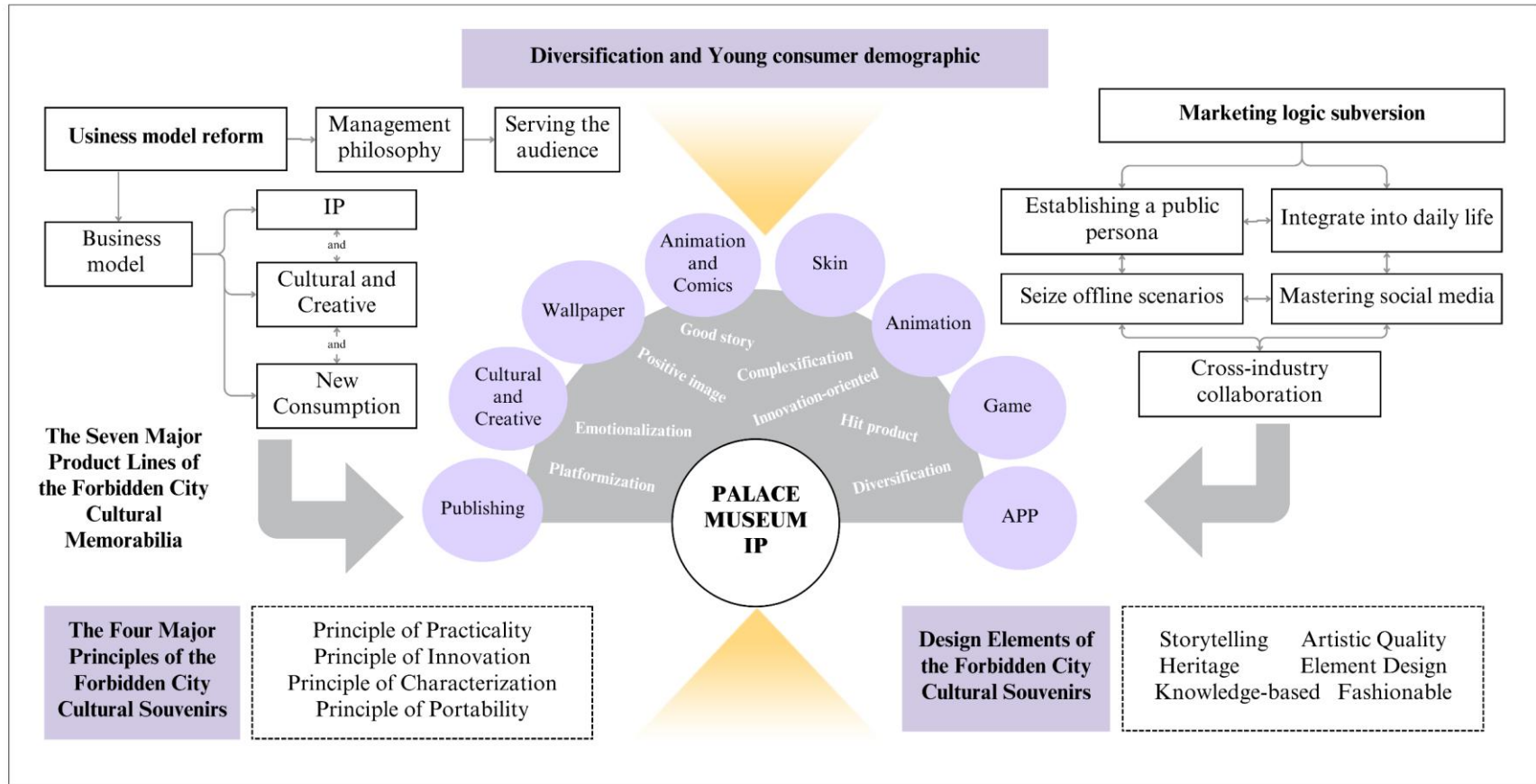


Figure 2.23: The Product Matrix for Cultural and Creative Souvenirs of the Forbidden City (Summarised from CSF, 2023)

2.5.1.2 Cultural Identity

Cultural values dominate social life in China. Chinese culture gradually assimilates these ideals and coexists with contemporary and Western cultural norms. Chinese consumers purchase souvenirs to uphold family values, build and maintain relationships, and attempt to elevate their social position; yet, they prioritise the practical use of souvenirs over brand image.

Designers must consider cultural factors when developing new products because exploring and understanding these cultural factors and transforming them into product design features is the only way to inject new vitality into traditional products, according to Auernhammer and Roth's (2021) research. Graburn (2024) emphasised the importance of souvenirs as a visible representation of local people and their contribution to cultural development.

Many souvenirs are based on local ethnic art, tools, and handicrafts, which change shape, function, meaning, and symbolic importance with time (Torabian & Arai, 2016). Souvenirs symbolise local culture, and culture-based product design is the most commonly used strategy in souvenir design (Zhu et al., 2022).

A range of topics on souvenirs and the importance of purchasing culturally appropriate souvenirs may be found in the literature on shopping trips (Anderson & Littrell, 1995; Littrell et al., 1994; Park, 2000; Swanson & Horridge, 2006; Wilkins, 2011).

According to research by Kim and Littrell (2001), tourists' propensity to buy souvenirs directly correlates with their interest in the local way of life. Their cultural identity

influences tourists' selection of souvenirs; they typically choose items that reflect the history and culture of the place they are visiting, as these souvenirs can symbolise their trip.

Balermipas and Manola (2020) investigate the value of cultural assets and the interest of tourists in buying souvenirs. The study unveiled the influence of tourism products on markers of national identity. The suppliers' agreement regarding the provenance of souvenirs centres on the tenacious pursuit of objective authenticity, despite the intense competition from foreign dealers and local markets.

Regarding local cultural tourism, perceived value is the most powerful precondition to evoke local emotional attachment to a destination. tourists' expectations of a destination are partially communicated through souvenirs, which might evoke feelings and influence their inclination to go. Manola and Balermipas (2020) examined tourists' interest in buying souvenirs and the value of cultural heritage. The results showed a dynamic relationship between national identity markers and tourism items. Several decisions made by state authorities to emphasise particular facets of their cultural heritage include the sale of souvenirs.

Numerous research studies concentrate on how consumers view cultural development through marketing cultural items. According to Liu et al. (2019), users no longer require intangible cultural heritage for its original purposes because it is now divorced from people's daily lives. Tourists' interest in ethnic tourism should be fully capitalised upon in the commercial advertising of souvenirs to encourage them to bring traditional culture home (Soukhathammavong & Park, 2019). To fully utilise souvenirs as a medium for observing and comprehending the past, present, and future while influencing it, spaces for their evaluation and transformation must be created (Manola & Balermipas, 2020).

Retailers of souvenirs must have a strong marketing plan. Effective marketing techniques for souvenir retailers have been the subject of several studies. Retailers often use narrative to sell authentic souvenirs (Soukhathammavong & Park, 2019); brand effect can boost souvenir sales (Wang et al., 2025; Tanaka et al., 2024); and restricting purchase choices to in-store can enhance the likelihood of purchase (Inman et al., 2009). The significance of cultural identity in souvenir marketing is reflected in these tactics.

i. Handmade Crafts

The primary determinant of consumer purchasing decisions is cultural identity, especially in how handmade artwork is purchased. Handmade art is a valuable component of cultural souvenirs, and its worth is derived from its craft technology, cultural importance, and physical form. “Craftsmanship” refers to the inventiveness, skill, and technology that are fundamental to regionally made souvenirs (Duan et al., 2023). Several souvenirs created in China using age-old methods are also called ICH items.

Handmade art has substantial market value and is one of the most prominent categories of souvenirs (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). The global handicrafts market was estimated to be \$583.4 billion in 2018 by the Handicrafts Market: Global Industry Trends, Share, Size, Growth, Opportunities and Forecasts 2019-2024 (IMARC Group, 2019). Swanson and Timothy (2012) describe handicrafts as among the most significant categories of souvenirs. Skilled artists create quality souvenirs by resurrecting historic objects to fit modern markets (Duan et al., 2019; Cseh, 2023). Zabulis et al. (2023) conducted a qualitative study to demonstrate how the definition and value of handicrafts vary depending on cultural and social situations, as they are more than just material objects but also bearers of culture and history. When individuals use crafts as souvenirs, they often associate them with

personal memories of a specific event or location. Handicraft production requires both intangible and tangible skills, traditions, dexterity, knowledge, and affiliation with community culture, economy, and religion - all of which contribute to the tangible and intangible worth of crafts.

Customary art represents cultural ideas, and refining it represents a person's or a group's identity. Folk art can be preserved, and people can be helped to appreciate the aesthetic value and significance of folk culture by incorporating traditional art into the design of current cultural creative products (Zhang, 2021). When creating handcrafted artworks, greater care and expertise are put into the process instead of manufacturing them mechanically, and customers value the custom by purchasing the artwork and forging a bond with the creator (Kurlinkus, 2014).

The personal touch of souvenirs highlights the importance of handicrafts, and the pursuit of distinctive and eye-catching items requires the particular abilities of regional artisans or the participation of recognisable artists. To create ethnic and traditional goods that reflect their distinct heritage, culture, and way of life, local artists and craftspeople are crucial (Soukhathammavong & Park, 2019). Customers' intention to buy may be influenced by a brand either directly or indirectly. tourists' social and personal brand identities influence their intention to purchase ICH items. Customers may be persuaded to purchase ICH souvenirs of particular firms by brand identity when faced with homogenised products (Guo et al., 2022; Zhou & Liu, 2024).

Cultural values fundamentally shape products, and design can propel cultural advancement (Husa, 2020). Similarly, combining tourism with artisan activities can preserve handicraft culture (Wu et al., 2022). Different tourism products showcase culture in unique

handmade ways, based on feedback from participants in a study about the role of local crafts in supporting cultural tourism (Özgit et al., 2023).

In addition to their economic, social, artistic, historical, and symbolic significance, handmade artworks are valuable because they are closely associated with the social, functional, and spiritual or religious significance of a location (Duan et al., 2023; Shtudiner et al., 2019). “States Parties shall draw up lists of intangible cultural heritage by their national circumstances,” according to the UNESCO Convention from 2003. China is aggressively carrying out the Convention’s provisions to create a national inventory of ICH, which is broken down into ten categories and assigned a unique number for each piece. Furthermore, the national cultural authority has identified five groups of representative inheritors for national intangible cultural heritage projects. The practical activities of its inheritors primarily carry ICH, a “living” cultural form (CARI, 2007).

This research presents a list of the top ten Chinese handicrafts and cultural souvenirs, together with their corresponding details, compiled from literature and a search of representative ICH projects in China (Table 2.12). Refer to Appendix D for further information, images, and cases.

Furthermore, a great deal of research has found that design identity may influence consumers’ purchase intentions either directly or indirectly (Chen et al., 2021; Li et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2023; Zong et al., 2023; Liu & Zhao, 2024). These studies relate to food, electronics, and apparel. Zhou and Liu (2024) discovered that consumers may purchase ICH souvenirs from certain companies due to design identity when faced with homogenised products. Their social and personal brand identities influence tourists’ intention to acquire

items related to ICH. A well-known example is the global collaboration between LOEWE, a globally recognised luxury brand and China ICH (Appendix H).

Table 2.12: Ranking of Chinese Handicrafts and Cultural Souvenirs

Ranking	Type	Province	Time to Apply for ICH
1	Ceramic	Jiangxi	2009
2	Lacquerware	Fujian	2007
3	Woodcarving	Zhejiang	2007
4	Cloisonné	Beijing	2007
5	Jade Carving	Jiangsu	2007
6	Embroidery	Sichuan	2009
7	Shadow puppet	Shaanxi	2008
8	Paper-cutting	Shanxi	2007
9	Coloured Glaze	Bejing	2008
10	Bamboo Weaving	Zhejiang	2007

ii. Materials Used

“Material” is a key component in the design and manufacture of tourism souvenirs; It conveys not only the culture and emotion of the destination but also the product’s quality. Materials are classified as ‘local’ and ‘local emotional materials’ by Duan et al. (2023). Indigenous resources are raw materials exclusive to a given area and cannot be manufactured elsewhere. Due to their rarity and Unique, they are highly valued. Even if not entirely local, items strongly associated with the local culture can evoke connections and feelings specific to a given area. This category is referred to as local emotional materials.

For instance, hair is crucial to creating a hair embroidery piece from the Lu Embroidery tradition (Figure 2.24). Hair is closely associated with the Jinan embroidery tradition, although it might not originate from Jinan. Such an association suggests that local

emotional material is valuable because it is physically from the local area and because of its local culture (Duan et al., 2023).

Silva et al. (2025) mentions that the production process of tourist souvenirs should embody the concepts of low carbon footprint and environmental conservation. Therefore, tourist souvenirs should use locally produced materials and reflect local culture. This not only strengthens the localness of souvenirs, enhances the cultural identity of souvenirs, and protects the environment (Soukhathammavong & Park, 2019).



Figure 2.24: Lu Embroidery - Hair Embroidery

The low quality of souvenirs may affect tourists' emotions and perceptions of the destination to a slight extent. Tourists can interpret the "inner meaning" of a place through the quality of the products. In addition, product quality is directly affected by the quality of

the material (Al - Msallam, 2020). Since the local climate affects material growth, tourists who evaluate the quality of the items gain an indirect understanding of the local climate.

Appendix F summarises the primary materials associated with Chinese cultural souvenirs and a distribution map of their origins, including “jade, wood, paper, ceramics, silk, bamboo”- six common Chinese cultural souvenir materials. These materials are widely distributed and readily accessible in China, reflecting its abundant natural resources and profound cultural heritage. The preceding discussion highlights the importance of souvenir materials; using such materials can better convey Chinese local characteristics and cultural values.

iii. Production Process

According to some research, it is becoming increasingly important to design unique, captivating, and customised perceptual experiences for tourists at each stage of the product’s life cycle (da Conceição Gonçalves et al., 1997; Tussyadiah, 2014; Cetin & Bilgihan, 2016). This trend highlights the significance of creating tourist souvenirs, not only because it relates to the product’s quality and distinctiveness but also because it can provide tourists with a memorable experience.

“Process” refers to the steps and time required to create the craft. Each stage in traditional production methods is highly complex, with all processes being interdependent and essential (Duan et al., 2023). The tangible impact of manufacturing techniques on enhancing a product’s cultural and historical value is further supported by relevant empirical research.

The cost of choosing which souvenirs to stock in a gift shop includes production, shipping, and storage expenses (Sthapit, 2017; Sthapit & Björk, 2017; Swanson & Timothy, 2012; Timothy, 2005). In addition, it is vital to consider changes in tourists' desires and preferences. For artisans, particularly independent ones who may require more support to sustain their businesses, it is essential to revitalise traditional crafts (Shtudiner et al., 2019). Craftspeople can gain financial independence through commercialisation, which also promotes public awareness of traditional craftsmanship.

Tourists evaluate souvenirs from emotional and cognitive perspectives. Positive feedback may come from tourists' sensory enjoyment, production processes and the souvenir's localness (Duan et al., 2023). According to Fu (2023), individuals are attached to raw materials, craftsmanship, opportunities for personal growth, a sense of achievement, skill acquisition, physical and emotional regulation, and socio-cultural production processes when they create handicrafts. All of these factors affect the well-being of the craft (Duan et al., 2023).

Several studies indicated that tourists who participate in the production of souvenirs become co-designers rather than consumers and even more participants in the production process (Anastasiadou & Vettese, 2019). This would increase the possibility that they would make purchases and enhance their willingness to support preserving the destination's culture (Lv et al., 2024). The customisation of souvenirs is affected by tourists' psychological ownership of the souvenir, the culture it represents, and the cultural congruence between the souvenir and the destination.

2.5.2 Design Features

When considering the importance of design features of souvenirs, many researchers have published their opinions and conclusions. Souvenir design has many characteristics, such as shape, colour, material and craft. These characteristics affect each other during the process of souvenir design and achieve the effect of tourist souvenirs (Qiuxia et al., 2022; Qiu & Liu, 2024; Qiu et al., 2024). Duan et al. (2023) mention that souvenir design must be attractive, meaningful, unique, and authentic, and these factors are critical to tourist satisfaction, as tourists' satisfaction with souvenirs is frequently derived from the relationship between the souvenir and the region or environment it represents. Wang (2023) stated that souvenir design at many tourist attractions lacks local characteristics, is disconnected from consumers' daily lives, and lacks practical value, resulting in low tourist purchase intention, demonstrating the importance of studying souvenir design features.

Hartanti and Wianto's (2024) empirical investigation found that, while tourists are price-sensitive, design has a greater influence on purchasing decisions. They emphasise the distinctiveness of souvenir design and the significance of design components such as subject matter, intention, form, colour, material, and function. Wang (2021) also indicated that souvenir design contains many parts, and these parts play a crucial role in the connotation of the souvenirs. Li (2020) segmented the expressive dimension of the mark of the location visited, relationship, and idol worship and offered a new understanding of the multidimensional value of souvenirs. The most important attributes of the quality of the souvenir, the suitability as a gift, the name of the location visited, and intentional aspects (purpose, usefulness, and fit or appropriateness for the recipient), according to Amaro et al. (2020). The overall assessment of the tourists of the souvenirs is based on the above

characteristics. According to Yu and Littrell (2003), sensory enjoyment, craftsmanship, ease of use, and cultural connection influence people to choose craft souvenirs.

This research reveals the importance of design value in purchasing tourist gifts. Thus, conducting in-depth research on the characteristics of souvenirs' design can help enhance souvenirs' attractiveness and market competitiveness and meet the tourists' desires for souvenirs with connotations.

2.5.2.1 Care and Travel

A large volume of research has provided valuable insights about the “Care and Travel” qualities of tourist gifts. Kim and Littrell (1999, 2001) discovered that the features of ease of care and mobility of souvenirs played a key role in the purchasing decision, particularly when the souvenirs were given as presents, and that these traits had a greater impact on purchase intention.

Vasheghani-Farahani et al. (2014) found that quality and portability in souvenir design significantly influence purchasing behaviour. Amaro et al. (2020) found that traditional local products and magnets are the most popular types of souvenirs, with tourists preferring simple to clean and transport, attractive, and usable as accessories. Baker et al. (2002) also advocated that design should acknowledge changes in environmental conditions.

According to Qiu and Liu (2024), in a CAD collaboration-based technique for optimising the design of tourism souvenirs, some tourists place a higher value on keepsake comfort and convenience. This aligns with the findings of Swanson and Horridge (2006), an early study on souvenir purchasing indicators, which found that some tourists who pay

attention to product qualities may desire safety and comfort when selecting souvenirs while travelling.

Many experts view the comfort of keepsakes from different perspectives. Swanson and Horridge (2006) stated that consumers enjoy souvenirs in the early stages due to their design and comfort. Furthermore, Jin et al. (2024) suggest that the emotional design of souvenirs might provide customers with comfort and relief from stress.

Based on these findings, this research may conclude that tourists consider souvenir attributes such as ease of cleaning, portability, and pleasing design when purchasing. However, studies differ on how to balance the commercial and cultural qualities of souvenirs, influencing the direction and strategy of souvenir design. This research contends that while these investigations illuminate tourist souvenir design, they fail to address the specific needs of Chinese tourists.

2.5.2.2 Aesthetic

Visual symbols are essential for conveying qualities and cultural connotations, and they are typically portrayed through components such as shape, colour, pattern, and font (Cheng, 2024; Du & Zhang, 2016). A foundation study on buying crafts as souvenirs found that attractive colour and design, high-quality craftsmanship or technique, ability to display in the home, cost, and making a good gift were among the most relevant factors (Littrell et al., 1994). Hu and Yu (2007) discovered that high-quality craftsmanship and aesthetic satisfaction are essential when purchasing handicrafts as souvenirs. The aesthetic qualities of keepsakes have traditionally been regarded as one of the most essential factors (Kim & Littrell, 2001; Swanson & Horridge, 2002; Swanson & Horridge, 2004).

Similarly, Vasheghani-Farahani et al. (2014) discovered, through empirical research, that the design and traditional patterns of souvenirs have a great impact on purchasing behaviour, emphasising the relevance of design, quality, and cultural components in souvenir purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, Li and Guo (2020) discovered that many tourists do not purchase gifts due to a lack of features, and they proposed integrating regional cultural components to increase attraction. Peng and Shi (2018) discussed the application of regional festival culture in the design of tourist souvenirs, emphasised the importance of souvenirs as a medium for urban culture and image dissemination, and proposed a design direction for souvenirs that incorporates local characteristics and festival culture.

Qiu et al. (2024) argue that the typical shape of agricultural souvenirs often reflects the form of agricultural products, such as farm tools and crops. They suggest that innovative design can transform agricultural materials into abstract visuals or symbols, emphasising their artistic and aesthetic value. For example, variations in lines or shapes to depict crop growth can enhance the artistic appeal of such keepsakes.

Aesthetic aspects in souvenir design can draw buyers' attention and convey the destination's distinctiveness. Souvenirs represent the destination's qualities through the aesthetic features listed below.

i. Colour

Colour is crucial in cultural souvenir design as it conveys cultural meaning and draws consumer attention. Scholars worldwide have reached a broad consensus and conducted much research on this topic. For example, Guo (2024) noted that ancient Chinese artisans

and painters used colour to express emotions and psychology. They applied colours with humanised connotations for strong emotional expression. Most cultural souvenirs, such as Huishan clay figures (Figure 2.25), use traditional Chinese colours: green, black, white, red, and yellow (Cheng & Pan, 2020).

These colours, linked to Taoism’s five elements and orientations with symbols, greatly influence traditional Chinese colour use (Figure 2.26).

Many researchers have diverse ideas regarding what colours of souvenirs are most appealing to tourists. Wang (2023) et al. explored Chinese people’s traditional colour symbolism, such as red, which denotes auspiciousness and wealth (Feng, 2022); yellow, which represents power and honour (Reng, 2011); and blue, which represents classic Chinese beauty (Wang, 2023). Ma and Lou (2015) employed the chi-square test and colour preference measurement to assess the colour preferences of various tourist groups in the tourist souvenir market, and they proposed countermeasures and recommendations for the development, management, and marketing of tourist souvenirs.




Colour Sample Legend	
Colour Configuration Extraction	
Typical colour matching extraction	
Typical monochromatic extraction	

Figure 2.25: Shows Typical Colour Extraction of Huishan Clay Figurines (Cheng & Pan, 2020)

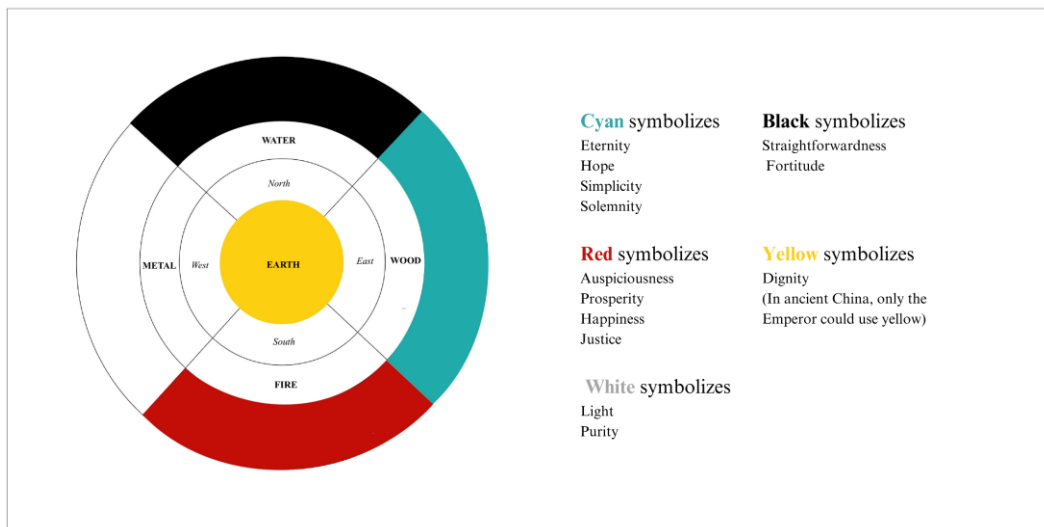


Figure 2.26: Five Elements, Five Orientations, Five Colours (Adapted from Guo, 2024)

Regarding how to develop the most appealing souvenir colours for tourists, Feng (2022) stated that in souvenir colour collocation, contrast and harmony should be balanced, resulting in colourful, harmonious, and complete items. Zhang (2020) stated that because derived products differ in substance, texture, and carrier, the influence of these aspects should be fully considered in colour matching and use, and the corresponding colour should be chosen.

Although experts believe that colour plays an important part in the design of cultural souvenirs and impacts consumer psychology, they disagree on how colour is explicitly used. Currently, the changes and future trends of popular colours and their application in souvenir design receive little attention. Popular colours are sometimes overlooked when designing souvenirs for the Chinese market.

ii. Pattern

By addressing how to express cultural information through pattern design to create attractive keepsakes, This research can utilise the research findings of numerous researchers.

Chen and Tang (2016) conducted market research on Han cultural aspects in Xuzhou, specifically Han stone carvings, and discovered that morphological analysis may successfully broaden the design concepts of souvenirs. Liu et al. (2022) discovered that the symmetrical design of souvenirs can enhance tourists' aesthetic satisfaction. Guo's (2024) research demonstrates the symmetrical and balanced arrangement of traditional old buildings, the beauty of order and the significance of serenity and stability in souvenir design.

Zhang (2018) investigated the application of contemporary graphic design in printing and dyeing tourist souvenirs, discussed aspects such as creative design, product design, and marketing, and summarised the impact of graphic design on printing and dyeing tourist souvenirs. Meng (2015), on the other hand, was inspired by the patterns of Guangxi Zhuang Brocade and developed a series of visual design ideas for souvenirs featuring cultural traits of Guangxi ethnic minorities.

Li (2021) utilised symbolic symbols from Yao cultural graphics to create personalised tourism products for Yao intellectual property. Zhang (2017) conducted a thorough investigation of Jiarong Tibetan traditional decorative patterns and created new local tourism souvenirs using current design approaches to promote the preservation and inheritance of Jiarong Tibetan culture.

Researchers generally feel that pattern design is important for tourist souvenirs, but there are differing opinions on combining traditional and modern aesthetics and increasing souvenirs' global competitiveness. This research emphasises the importance of combining local culture with modern design to artistically portray traditional cultures. The current research requires further investigation into the application and innovation of pattern design,

particularly how to increase the market and cultural value of souvenirs through pattern design.

iii. Shape

There has been a great volume of research focusing on the use of form design to create beautiful keepsakes. Si (2024) conducted research on the outer contour characteristics of cloud shoulders in the Qing Dynasty and proposed that designers could use these characteristics and modern design techniques to combine the essence of traditional culture with modern aesthetics and practicality in souvenir design. Sheng (2021), drawing on the souvenir industry in Taizhou, emphasised the necessity of shaping innovation to preserve the connotation of tourism culture. Li (2021) collected symbolic symbols from Yao cultural figures, demonstrating the importance of shape design in promoting national solidarity and spreading national culture.

Ma (2020) examines tourist souvenirs from the perspectives of cultural production and consumption, concluding that shape design significantly impacts the cultural value of souvenirs and consumers' purchase intention. Zhu et al. (2024) investigated ice and snow art modelling goods based on digital architecture, emphasising the significance of shape design in creating new tourism souvenirs. Zeng (2019) emphasised the integration design of regional culture and tourist souvenirs, and he considered that shape design was an important factor in connecting regional culture and tourist souvenirs.

Scholars generally agree on the importance of shape in souvenir design, which represents regional and national features and contributes significantly to souvenirs' cultural value and market competitiveness. Although there are differing perspectives, This research contends that form design should incorporate local culture and current design while

creatively reflecting traditional culture. The current research should look into how to combine traditional and modern aesthetics, as well as how to improve souvenirs' global competitiveness through shape design.

2.5.2.3 Unique

Tourists typically have adequate time to buy souvenirs while travelling. At this moment, relatively interesting and novel products may readily capture the attention of tourists and entice them to purchase (Wang, 2021). Creativity is becoming more crucial in politics, economics, the humanities, and product design.

Many researchers have explored approaches to create unique and appealing tourist souvenirs. Other souvenir attributes that influence souvenir purchases include Unique/ingenious ideas (Kim & Littrell, 1999; Sthapit, 2018; Swanson & Horridge, 2004), being a lovely gift or suitable for a collection made by a well-known artisan (Li & Cai, 2008; Swanson & Horridge, 2002, 2004), quality (Li & Cai, 2008), and having the name, design, or representation of the place visited (Li & Cai, 2008; Olalere, 2017; Park, 2000; Sthapit, 2018).

McLeod (1976) believes handcrafted souvenirs are constructed from local materials or traditional crafts. Graburn (1984) discovered that tourists are more eager to purchase souvenirs that reflect local qualities, such as crafts created by the local population. This is congruent with Ma's (2024) empirical study, which found that local features are the most important aspects to consider when assessing the practicality of tourist souvenirs.

Wang (2021) stated that unique and novel tourist souvenirs are more likely to capture tourists' attention and stimulate their purchase desire. This is consistent with Zhao's (2021)

belief that by combining cultural symbols with the cultural characteristics of tourist destinations and general commodities, tourism operators can endow them with special cultural significance and value connotation, thereby increasing their added value.

Sun (2019) discussed the distinctiveness of Oroqen folk culture and presented novel techniques for incorporating these cultural features into the design of tourist souvenirs, emphasising the value of Unique and limited editions. Zeng (2019) also stated that by maintaining unique regional features, the design of tourist souvenirs may be truly unforgettable through cultural, technological, and emotional factors.

Zhao and Li (2016) discussed the new form of tourist souvenirs in the context of “Internet+”, using Guilin digital creative postcards as an example, analysing design ideas and promotional applications of digital creative products, and emphasising the use of the Internet in the tourism industry.

Yan (2021) explores the use of regional cultural symbols to produce tourist gifts. Yan (2021) uses Hugang Township as an example to emphasise that regional culture should be incorporated into the design of tourist souvenirs, such as the craft producer’s signature or logo and the name or emblem of the visited location. Li and Wang (2022) showed that image learning technology based on deep learning is highly effective in the production of cultural souvenirs. Du and Zhang (2016) presented a souvenir cloud design system enabling resource sharing and cloud manufacturing of cultural and creative products.

The academic community believes that the design of tourist souvenirs should incorporate regional culture, new technology, and high-quality techniques to improve cultural image and economic development. However, different researchers have varied

methodologies for integrating cultural components into modern design, indicating that the application and innovation of tourist gift design require further investigation.

This research aims to examine the design elements of cultural souvenirs to determine tourist preferences. Understanding tourists' preferences for design features can help marketers, designers, and even destination management firms improve their offerings.

In summary, the extant literature firmly establishes the significant influence of design features, encompassing dimensions of care and travel, aesthetics, and uniqueness - on souvenir purchase decisions. However, this body of work is predominantly situated within Western contexts or examines souvenirs as generic commodities. A pronounced research gap exists in understanding the specific design preferences of Chinese tourists within the distinct context of cultural souvenirs. For instance, questions of how to balance pragmatic “care and travel” attributes with the principles of traditional Chinese aesthetic philosophies (e.g., the symbolism of the “Five Colours”) remain largely unexplored. This study addresses this gap by empirically investigating which design features resonate most with Chinese tourists and how these preferences translate into purchase intentions for culturally significant souvenirs.

2.5.3 Demographic Factors

Several studies have demonstrated that socio-demographic factors influence tourist behaviour (Amaro et al., 2016; Tasci et al., 2022). Socio-demographic factors are crucial when purchasing souvenirs. Timothy (2005) divides these elements into two categories: external (such as store location qualities, customer service, and souvenir attributes) and intrinsic (such as demographic variables and cultural background). The elements influencing

souvenir choices were further categorised by Yoon-Jung (2007) as travel characteristics, destination environment, and personal traits of tourists.

The purchasing behaviour of cultural souvenirs is directly and indirectly influenced by demographic factors, including age, gender, income, education level, and family structure (Yu & Littrell, 2005). Tourists' gender influences the kind of mementoes they purchase and how much they are willing to spend on them (Turner & Reisinger, 2001). The choice of souvenirs is also significantly influenced by culture (Park, 2000; Hobson & Christensen, 2001) and income (Yu & Littrell, 2005).

2.5.3.1 Gender

The purchasing behaviour of tourists is significantly influenced by gender. Gender and tourist purchase behaviour are significantly correlated, according to earlier research (Jansen-Verbeke, 1987; Anderson & Littrell, 1995; Littrell, 1996; Lehto et al., 2004; Abdulsalam & Dahana, 2022). In addition to being a crucial factor in market positioning and segmentation (Bakshi, 2012; Fang et al., 2016; McCarty & Shrum, 1993), gender also affects how consumers view certain aspects of products. The need to consider gender in travel purchase research is highlighted by the divergent opinions of male and female tourists about the experience and satisfaction of travel purchasing (Anderson & Littrell, 1995). The relationship between product choice and satisfaction may be modulated by variations in gender roles, social interactions, and information processing (Ganesan - Lim et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2022).

According to Wilkins (2011), the most popular souvenir categories, regardless of gender, are photographs, postcards, and paintings of the location. The study discovered that female tourists spend more than male tourists (Lehto et al., 2004) and buy mementoes more

frequently. Furthermore, women are substantially more inclined than males to acquire regional crafts, other local products, and souvenirs for gifts. However, several souvenir aspects, such as cultural importance, features that symbolise the attraction, overall quality, and travel recall, are more important to male and highly educated tourists (Li, 2012).

Women make up the majority of gift-giving in industrialised societies, often selecting souvenirs as gifts (Cheal, 1987; Komter, 1996; Kaell, 2012). According to Amaro et al. (2020), women purchase more souvenirs than men. In particular, women are more likely to purchase souvenirs as gifts, purchase more souvenirs overall, and develop into collectors. However, Combrink and Swanson (2000) discovered that men and women differed in selecting souvenir products, product qualities, and store attributes, such as the choice of collectables, local cuisine, antiques, literature about the area, and toys. Men also use heuristic cues more than women (Verma, 2020), and gender variations in information processing are predicted to affect how they travel and what they buy when they travel (Anderson & Littrell, 1995).

In conclusion, gender significantly influences tourists' purchasing behaviour for souvenirs. While males focus more on souvenirs' culture and qualitative features, women hold a higher share of the tourist souvenir business. However, there has been little research into the differences between male and female Chinese tourists when it comes to purchasing cultural souvenirs.

2.5.3.2 Age

Age is among the most investigated socio-demographic variables (Macintyre & Anderson, 1997). First suggested in Littrell's (1990) study, age is a significant predictor of how tourists buy souvenirs. Age has a substantial impact on tourists' purchase decisions, as

evidenced by subsequent academic evaluations (Anderson & Littrell, 1995; Aziz et al., 2018; Biswas et al., 2020; Littrell, 1990; Tassawa & Khumhome, 2023). Most research shows that tourists of different ages have distinct demands and preferences when it comes to souvenirs (Kim & Littrell, 2001). For instance, a study by Turner and Reisinger (2001) discovered that gender and age impact purchasing decisions.

There is mounting evidence that age is a significant demographic variable that influences purchases of souvenirs (Amaro et al., 2020; Shtudiner et al., 2019), despite previous research suggesting that age is not a key factor in determining travel and souvenir buying habits (Anderson & Littrell, 1996; Kim & Littrell, 2001). However, age significantly impacts how people buy souvenirs (Anderson & Littrell, 1995; Littrell et al., 1993). Young tourists value purchasing souvenirs more than older tourists (Holiday Inn, 2015).

Kim and Littrell (2001) discovered that young tourists choose souvenirs that provide a unique purchasing experience, whereas senior consumers value the attractiveness of keepsakes obtained after long-term use. Lehto et al. (2004) found that younger groups were more likely to purchase apparel, but older groups were more likely to purchase tobacco or alcohol goods. Li's (2012) study also examined the association between souvenir purchasing and age, discovering that tourists over 60 were more concerned with whether souvenirs could help them remember the trip or accurately represent the sites they visited.

Furthermore, tourists' priorities, demands, and tastes differ according to their age (Mimbs et al., 2020). tourists of different ages have distinct reasons and preferences when buying souvenirs, as evidenced by the differences in the characteristics that younger and older tourists choose (Kim & Littrell, 2001). According to Qi and Luo (2005), senior tourists opt to create beautiful and superior arts and crafts since they have many savings. This was

further developed by research by Littrell et al. (1994), who noted that tourists who are ethnic, artistic, and human-oriented are more likely to be older and female. They are also more likely to enjoy products with painted decorations and be drawn to fabric crafts. Tourists interested in history and parks are likelier to be female, but they also purchase crafts, postcards, books about the region, local cuisine, and souvenirs. Most active outdoor tourists are young people who, when looking for souvenirs, prefer T-shirts, hoodies, and crafts made from natural materials.

In conclusion, tourists of different ages exhibit varying tastes and reasons when choosing souvenirs, and age has a significant influence on the purchasing behaviour of tourists. However, there has been little research on the age segmentation of Chinese tourists' design preferences for cultural souvenirs.

2.5.3.3 Income Level

One important factor influencing tourists' purchasing patterns and purchasing power is their income level. The level of demand and tourists' purchasing power are directly influenced by the state of the economy (Qi & Luo, 2005). Prior research has shown that socioeconomic position influences travel behaviour, attitudes, and expenditure on tourism-related activities (Horita & Kato, 2020; Mok & Defranco, 2000). Thus, it makes sense to believe that income level significantly determines the desire for domestic travel.

The ability to buy souvenirs is directly impacted by one's income level. While low-income groups are more concerned with cost and usefulness, high-income groups are more likely to purchase valuable or high-quality keepsakes. Tourists with varying income levels have different expectations and requirements for the quality and pricing of souvenirs, as evidenced by research showing a substantial relationship between respondents' satisfaction

and income level (Cakir et al., 2010). High-income tourists spend considerably more than ordinary tourists (Nguyen et al., 2023; Phan et al., 2023).

Social factors, such as family, income, and social status significantly influence consumption behaviour. According to Durmaz and Gündüz (2021), household consumption is significantly influenced by income distribution. While high-income households place more emphasis on factors such as quality, attractiveness, and trust, low-income households consider the availability of affordable alternatives when making decisions about consumption and purchases. According to Bojanic's (2011) research, families without children typically spend more on shopping than families with children.

Tourism locations need to know which tourists are more inclined to spend money and which aspects contribute to higher travel expenditures to maximise economic benefits (Dadgostar & Isotalo, 1992; Mayer & Vogt, 2016). According to research by Qi and Luo (2005), tourists in better financial standing are more likely to purchase expensive, high-quality, and artistic mementoes from their trip, such as arts and crafts items, to boast about or compare to others. Additionally, working-class tourists typically select creative and practical travel souvenirs while having a steady but modest income. Tourists with tight budgets tend to consume less, be more frugal with their purchases, and focus more on the usefulness of souvenirs.

In conclusion, their economic level greatly influences tourists' spending patterns and decisions to buy souvenirs. To attract a broader range of tourists and increase economic efficiency, tourism sites and souvenir providers must consider the demands and preferences of tourists with varying income levels and offer goods and services that meet their

expectations. The available research lacks information on the demand for and preferences towards cultural souvenirs among Chinese tourists of various income levels.

2.5.3.4 Education Background

Tourist behaviour and souvenir choices are greatly influenced by educational attainment, particularly when recognising and appreciating the cultural significance of souvenirs. Although less research has been conducted on this topic compared to other aspects, tourists with higher education levels typically favour mementoes with educational purposes and historical and cultural significance. Prior research has demonstrated that tourists' choice of souvenirs may be influenced by their educational attainment, especially concerning the characteristics of souvenir products, their educational function, and their historical and cultural significance. The evidence suggests a relationship between education level and souvenir selection.

As Kay Smith et al. (2022) noted, tourists' preferences for souvenir shops are also influenced by their level of education. Tourists with higher education, for instance, might be more likely to select a store with an appealing atmosphere. In contrast, those with a lower education level might be more concerned with the business's authenticity and quality (Genc & Gulertekin Genc, 2023). Furthermore, highly educated tourists pay greater attention to product aspects such as cultural importance, elements symbolising scenic locations, overall quality, and holiday memories when selecting gifts (Li et al., 2021).

When purchasing native products, Chinese tourists with varying education levels have distinct concerns, as demonstrated by He's (2012) empirical study. Tourists with only a primary school education or less tend to prioritise price when purchasing local goods. Junior high school students show more interest in materials; high school students focus more on

packaging design; and college and undergraduate students prefer traditional crafts. Tourists with postgraduate degrees or higher place the highest value on brands. Additionally, those with college or bachelor's degrees prefer unique handicrafts more than those with lower education levels.

In conclusion, the level of education influences tourists' knowledge and appreciation of the cultural significance of souvenirs, their preference for certain souvenir features, and the stores they choose. Souvenirs' quality, brand, and cultural importance may become increasingly important to tourists as their education level rises. In China, the relevance of cultural souvenirs is gradually increasing.

To conclude, demographic variables such as age, gender, income, and education level are confirmed as important factors shaping souvenir preferences and purchasing behaviour. Nonetheless, the current research landscape lacks depth in its analysis of the Chinese tourist demographic, particularly in the niche of cultural souvenirs. Existing studies often fail to capture the nuanced preference heterogeneity stemming from generational and socio-economic differences specific to this market. For example, how the digital-native consumption patterns of Generation Z or the value-driven inclinations of the "silver economy" segment distinctly influence preferences for cultural souvenir design features is an area requiring dedicated scholarly attention. This study aims to fill this void by systematically examining the moderating and direct effects of key demographic factors on Chinese tourists' evaluations of cultural souvenir designs.

2.5.4 Perceived Authenticity

The quest for authenticity is a long-standing idea in Western culture. In this framework, the exploration of real holy places in Europe from the ninth to the eleventh

century gave rise to the concept of tourism revenue. The authenticity of 15th- and 16th-century China aided in expansion into other markets. Souvenirs, ethnic dishes, historical reconstructions, and original artwork are in high demand today (Grayson & Martinec, 2004).

Souvenirs and other tourism-related products are created and enjoyed as real experiences. However, because manufacturing such objects may be profitable for the host community, mass production may create a distinction between real handcrafted items and goods that are not genuinely produced (Halewood & Hannam, 2001).

In the tourism industry, perceived authenticity is a multifaceted and intricate notion encompassing tourists' subjective assessments of travel-related experiences and products. According to Heitmann (2011), the term "authenticity" has classical Greco-Roman roots and denotes something that is "genuine, true, and sincere".

Goeldener and Ritchie (2007) formulated the following definition: authenticity refers to the Unique, genuineness, cultural and historical integrity, artistry, attractiveness, and utility of mementoes. Authentic gifts should have distinctive characteristics that are difficult to find in tourists' daily lives (Zulaikha & Brereton, 2011). In the context of souvenir purchases, the perception of authenticity has been defined as the beliefs, ideas and impressions of individuals regarding the genuineness, Unique, workmanship, aesthetics, utility and cultural and historical integrity of souvenir products and their attributes (Littrell et al., 1993).

Authenticity is frequently used in museums to determine the cost or worth of artefacts (Trilling, 2009). However, in the tourism industry, it is often associated with the calibre of tourist experiences, attractions, and mementoes and is strongly tied to custom, originality, distinctiveness, or local distinctiveness. Wang (1999) observed that locals in the destination

can only recognise the authenticity of tourism items when they create, imitate, or perform them.

While the academic community disagrees on the definition and standards for evaluating authenticity (Cohen, 1988; Guttentag, 2009; MacCannell, 1973; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006; Shepherd, 2002; Atasoy, 2021), it is regarded as a social construct that is impacted by individual preferences as well as the overall characteristics of the product. “Authenticity is a socially constructed concept whose social connotations are, therefore, not given but negotiable,” according to Cohen (1988). This definition implies that authenticity is a dynamic, relative idea rather than an absolute standard.

Because of their links and places of origin, souvenirs have cultural significance. Nonetheless, there is debate surrounding the ideas of representation and authenticity. Regarding souvenir purchases, perceived authenticity, which includes the perception of authenticity, Unique, and cultural representation of souvenirs, is a crucial factor in determining the value of cultural souvenirs (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Soukhatammavong and Park (2019) define authenticity as the extent to which a souvenir embodies its cultural roots and local identity.

Due to its potential influence on tourists’ attitudes and behaviours, perceived authenticity is a significant psychological construct (He et al., 2023; Jiang et al., 2022; Tzeng et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2023). In the study of tourism, the idea of authenticity is crucial. A study on the authenticity of cultural themes in apparel souvenir purchases in New Zealand provided evidence in favour of the significance of authenticity (Asplet & Cooper, 2000). Tourists were more likely to purchase authentic products, according to a different Italian

study on the perceived influence of authenticity on purchasing expenditures during cultural events (Brida et al., 2013).

In the context of experience consumerism, researchers found that tourist's perceived value and behavioural intent can be positively impacted by the authenticity of souvenirs (Deng et al., 2021). This is in line with the 2022 study by Wei et al., which showed that tourists' authentic experiences significantly improve their travel memories and behavioural intentions, with travel memory acting as a partly mediating factor. The result implies that genuine travel experiences might strengthen favourable recollections of a place, which raises the possibility that people would return or recommend it to others. Past studies show authenticity is a primary focus in global souvenir research (Table 2.13).

Numerous elements, including production methods, packaging design, etc., influence how authentic tourists perceive a destination (Soukhatammavong & Park, 2019; Zhou et al., 2023). Some experts say the authenticity concept is vague and limited (Wang, 1999). Can authenticity assess the quality of travel experiences impartially? If not, how do definitions of authenticity for tourists differ? What makes an experience or item genuine? Who judges authenticity? Who decides what is real?

Individuals' perceptions of authenticity, however, can differ markedly, as each tourist may evaluate souvenirs in widely varying ways (Lin & Wang, 2012). According to one perspective, souvenirs must contain original components like artwork or tourist art to be valuable. Authenticity and Unique have long been considered crucial characteristics of souvenirs (Sthapit et al., 2017).

Table 2.13: Previous Research on Souvenir Shopping (Kızılcık & Birdir, 2023)

Researchers	Research Topics
Anderson and Littrell (1996); Park (2000); Mogindol and Bagul (2016); Swanson and Timothy (2012); Collins-Kreiner and Zins (2011); Anastasiadou and Vettese (2019); Li and Cai (2008); Ly and Lau (2024); Swanson and Horridge (2006)	Attitudes and behaviours of tourists towards souvenirs
Lin and Wang (2012); Chang et al. (2012); Trinh et al. (2014); Elomba and Yun (2018); Soukhathammavong and Park (2019); Brida et al. (2013); Deng et al. (2021); Dumbrovska and Fialova (2020)	Perceived authenticities of tourists and sellers towards souvenirs
Littrell et al. (1993); Wang (2012); Lin (2017); Akyürek and Zeybek (2018); Asplet and Cooper (2000); Lin et al. (2021)	Souvenirs of a particular type (e.g. food items, handicrafts)
Bojanic (2011); Chang (2014); Sthapit and Björk (2019); Fangxuan and Ryan (2018); Sthapit et al. (2018)	Souvenirs and tourist experiences
Lacher and Nepal (2011); Kong and Chang (2012); Wei (2018); Paraskevaidis and Andriotis (2015); Shtudiner et al. (2019)	Souvenirs and tourist value perception
Kong and Chang (2012); Lacher and Nepal (2011)	Souvenirs and their economic effects
Bynum Boley et al. (2013); Chang (2014); Suhartanto (2016); Anastasiadou and Vettese (2019)	Souvenirs, technology and social media relationship
Suhartanto (2016); Chang (2014)	Souvenirs and tourist satisfaction
Swanson and Horridge (2006)	Souvenirs and tourist motivations
Wong and Cheng (2014)	Souvenirs and destination image

However, many counterfeit souvenirs are on the market, and many academics agree that bogus tourism art is common. There is a conflict between maintaining social values and cultural customs and acknowledging the production of commercial revenue due to authenticity (Cave et al., 2007). Since they are not staged or manufactured for tourists, some individuals think that souvenirs that are not bought, yet act as reminders, are more genuine

(MacCannell, 2013). According to Horner (1993), the significance of authenticity is found in the tourist's interaction, which is conveyed through the keepsake and gives it its authenticity, rather than the object's validity.

The impression of authenticity is especially crucial when it comes to souvenirs. Authenticity influences tourists' perceptions of souvenirs' worth, quality, and desire to buy (Suttikun & Meeprom, 2018; Su et al., 2024). Tourists typically purchase mementoes that offer a genuine cultural experience and capture the essence of the place they are visiting (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). The perceived authenticity of mementoes is strongly tied to the place of origin, the production method, and the source of the materials. Customers frequently think that souvenirs made locally, employ traditional skills, and use local materials are more genuine and worthwhile.

Authentic souvenirs can help tourists connect with their holiday aims, resulting in a more meaningful life (Littrell et al., 1993). Anderson and Littrell (1995), Kim and Littrell (2001), Littrell et al. (1994) summarised the typical authentic handcrafted souvenirs by various tourists to limit their viewpoint: the product's originality; cultural and historical integrity; aesthetics; process quality; the artist's relationship to the product is formed with his or her hands; ability to perceive the elements of artisan creation; practical function of the process; local production; cost; and scarcity value. Labels or certificates serve as proof of validity. Researchers later investigated from the perspective of suppliers and discovered that "location and cultural reflection, use of natural materials, traditional equipment, and manual processing" are recognised predictors of authenticity (Soukhamvong & Park, 2019).

According to MacCannell (1973), authenticity is an impartial quality assessment. Currently, uniformly low-quality goods dominate the market, making it challenging for

tourists to determine the genuineness of mementoes. Boorstin (1992) and MacCannell (1973) link the monetisation of memorabilia to the loss of authenticity or a notable diminution in it. According to Ding and Zhao (2023), there is strong evidence that object-to-object consistency enhances consumers' perceptions of authenticity.

Recent research has further deepened the understanding of authenticity, particularly within post-pandemic and digital contexts. For instance, a study by Zhou et al. (2023) indicates that contemporary Chinese tourists' pursuit of authenticity focuses more on achieving a sense of connection and interactivity with the present-day life of a destination, rather than solely fixating on the static originality of cultural relics. Concurrently, He et al. (2023) found that constructing process authenticity through transparent brand narratives and behind-the-scenes stories of artisans can effectively enhance consumers' value identification with cultural and creative products. This offers crucial implications for contemporary souvenir marketing.

Thanks to the growth of digital technology and social media, customers now have access to additional information sources, making it easier to confirm the legitimacy of mementoes. To gain customers' confidence and favour, souvenir designers and marketers must use powerful techniques to communicate their goods' cultural significance and genuineness (Chang et al., 2012).

Tourists' choice of souvenirs is heavily influenced by authenticity (Elomba & Yun, 2018). Scholars confirmed that perceived authenticity triggers customers' purchase intention (Yu et al., 2020). The more familiar tourists are with the local culture, the stricter their understanding of authenticity (Revilla & Dodd, 2003). Perceived authenticity reflects tourists' judgements of a souvenir's cultural genuineness.

Additionally, the marketing content and sales environment of the mementoes will influence customers' perceptions of authenticity (Deng et al., 2021). Because attitudes towards cultural heritage have a significant beneficial impact on perceived value and customers' propensity to purchase souvenirs, suppliers and operators of tourism destinations must consider these factors (Liu, 2021).

According to marketing literature, human characteristics in product design can affect how consumers evaluate and choose products. Information hints spark the creation process, giving tourists the impression that souvenirs are authentic. The authenticity of memorabilia is getting more complicated in the era of additive manufacturing (Anastasiadou & Vettese, 2021). Designers and marketers of souvenirs are now concentrating on the authenticity of improved perception.

Guo and Zhu (2023) conducted an empirical study on ICH-souvenir purchasing behaviour. They found that perceived authenticity played a chain mediating role between ICH-souvenirs and purchase intention (Figure 2.27), which also laid the framework foundation for This research.

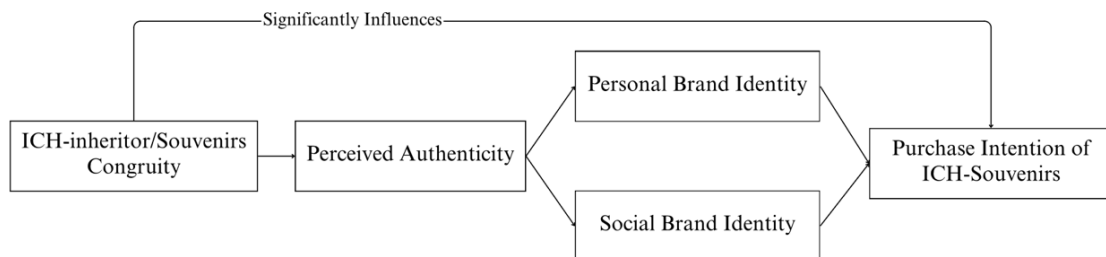


Figure 2.27: ICH-Souvenir Purchasing Behaviour Research Model (Guo & Zhu, 2023)

In synthesis, perceived authenticity is a well-established, multifaceted construct that critically influences tourist evaluations and purchase intentions for souvenirs. However, scholarly understanding of authenticity has been largely framed through Western theoretical

lenses and applied to generic tourism contexts. There is a scarcity of research that critically examines how Chinese tourists conceptualise and assess the authenticity of cultural souvenirs, which are deeply embedded in specific heritage narratives. A key unexplored question is how digital identities and experiences (e.g., in metaverse tourism) are reshaping the very criteria for “authenticity” among younger, tech-savvy Chinese tourists. By integrating perceived authenticity as a central mediating variable, this research seeks to illuminate its specific role and measurement in the decision-making process of Chinese tourists purchasing cultural souvenirs, thereby addressing this contextual and theoretical gap.

2.5.5 Critical Synthesis of Factors Affecting Purchase Decisions

This section has provided a comprehensive review of the multifaceted factors influencing the purchase decisions for cultural souvenirs, ranging from the distinctive nature of the souvenirs themselves and their design features to consumer demographic variables and their perceived authenticity. However, the literature reveals a notable fragmentation: the majority of studies are dedicated to examining a single category of factors in isolation, or stop at establishing a simple correlation between these factors and purchase intention.

This current state of research has resulted in several critical academic gaps. Firstly, there is a lack of in-depth explanation regarding how design features influence behaviour through psychological mechanisms. Whilst design elements (such as colour and pattern) are undoubtedly important, they do not directly determine purchasing behaviour. Rather, they function as cultural symbols to be interpreted, triggering a series of internal psychological processes. Secondly, although demographic variables are often considered significant influencing factors, the literature largely confines itself to describing “what” preferences different groups have, failing to clearly explain “why” these preferences emerge. In other

words, it does not elucidate the specific role these variables play within the “design-psychology-behaviour” chain - are they direct influences or moderating variables? Finally, whilst perceived authenticity is widely acknowledged as crucial, its precise position within the aforementioned chain remains ambiguous. Is it a direct outcome of design features, or is it the key bridge linking design to purchase intention? Existing research provides no definitive answer.

Consequently, the field is in urgent need of an integrated theoretical framework capable of situating these disparate influencing factors (design, demographics, authenticity) within a coherent logical system to systematically reveal their internal relationships and pathways of influence. This necessitates a paradigm shift in research from describing which factors exist to explaining how these factors interact.

In summary, this chapter has systematically reviewed the design features of cultural souvenirs (Section 2.5.2), demographic factors (Section 2.5.3), and perceived authenticity (Section 2.5.4). The literature not only offers multi-dimensional perspectives for understanding the shopping behaviour of Chinese tourists, but also directly underpins the three core objectives of this study: the influence of design features on purchase intention (corresponding to Research Question 1 and Hypothesis H1), the moderating role of demographic factors (corresponding to Research Question 2 and Hypotheses H2/H3), and the mediating mechanism of perceived authenticity (corresponding to Research Question 3 and Hypothesis H4). Building on this foundation, the subsequent section will integrate Peircean semiotics and the Theory of Planned Behaviour to develop an integrative conceptual model that explains “how design features influence purchase intention through processes of semiotic interpretation and psychological decision-making”.

2.6 Conceptual Framework Development

Based on the preceding review and critical synthesis of semiotics, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), and various influencing factors, the core objective of This research is to construct a coherent conceptual framework. This framework aims to precisely delineate how design features, functioning as cultural symbols, drive the purchase intention of Chinese tourists. This process is mediated by the internal mechanism of perceived authenticity, operates within the moderating conditions of demographic factors, and is ultimately channelled through the psychological decision-making process outlined by the TPB.

2.6.1 Conceptual Research Framework

The conceptual research framework of This research seeks to get a deeper understanding of the elements that influence Chinese tourists' purchase decisions for cultural souvenirs. The previous article has reviewed relevant theoretical concepts, including design features, demographic characteristics, and perceived authenticity, laying the foundation for constructing this framework.

Design features are a key factor affecting tourists' purchasing decisions. Relevant studies have indicated that they directly or indirectly affect consumers' purchasing intentions (Chen et al., 2021; Li et al., 2021) and have a significant impact on purchasing decisions (Wang, 2023). The literature review shows that design features include multiple aspects that constitute the rich connotation of souvenirs (Wang, 2021). Based on the theory proposed by Kim and Littrell (1999), This research constructs three dimensions of dependent variable design features: "Care and Travel", "Aesthetic" and "Unique".

“Care and Travel” characteristics play an important role in souvenir purchasing decisions, including comfort (Li & Cai, 2024; Swanson & Horridge, 2006), durability and easy cleaning, as well as convenience in carrying and storage (Amaro et al., 2020; Kim & Littrell, 1999, 2001; Vasheghani-Farahani et al., 2014), taking into account various environmental factors encountered during travel (Turner & Reisinger, 2001), and caring for tourists (Haldrup, 2017).

The aesthetic characteristics of souvenirs have always been considered among the most important criteria (Kim & Littrell, 2001; Swanson & Horridge, 2002; Swanson & Horridge, 2004). “Aesthetic” includes attractive appearance, colour, shape (Cheng, 2024; Littrell et al., 1994; Qiu et al., 2024), graphics or images (Vasheghani-Farahani et al., 2014), high quality (Hu & Yu, 2007) and the embodiment of regional cultural values and traditions (Li & Guo, 2020).

Literature reviews show that “Unique” is more likely to attract tourists’ attention and make them want to buy (Wang, 2021). Relevant design features include Unique/clever ideas (Kim & Littrell, 1999; Sthapit, 2018; Sthapit & Björk, 2017; Swanson & Horridge, 2004); a practical gift (Li & Cai, 2008); made by well-known craftsmen or using local materials (Swanson & Horridge, 2002, 2004; McLeod, 1976), with the signature or logo of the craft producer or the name/logo of the visited place (Li & Cai, 2008; Olalere, 2017; Park, 2000; Sthapit, 2018; Swanson & Horridge, 2002); unique or limited edition (Sun, 2019); and reflecting specific local culture or traditions.

Digital has significantly enhanced the convenience and satisfaction of souvenir purchases (Purwanto et al., 2024). With the rapid growth of China’s digital cultural souvenir market, some scholars have explored its concept (Mantas et al., 2021) and new possibilities

(Liddell, 2023; Mezei & Lapatoura, 2024), but there remains a lack of empirical research on its impact on purchase decisions as one of the design features. Therefore, this research integrates the development needs of the Chinese cultural souvenir market, identifies “digital technology innovation elements” as a design feature, and verifies its impact on purchase decisions in subsequent research.

Conceptually, “digital technology innovation elements” are integrated as a distinct yet complementary dimension within the broader “design features” construct. It is treated not as a separate independent variable, but as a fourth sub-dimension alongside “Care and Travel”, “Aesthetic”, and “Unique”. This reflects the modern reality where digital interactivity, virtual representation, and online accessibility have become intrinsic qualities that shape the overall design appeal and functional experience of cultural souvenirs.

In terms of constructing the moderator variable purchase intention statement, Swanson and Horridge (2006) emphasised that purchase motivation is the solution to driving consumers to buy cultural souvenirs, and Wilkins (2011) pointed out that three common motivations include giving as gifts to others, as memories of travel experiences, and as evidence of travel (Gordon, 1986; Kim & Littrell, 2001; Littrell et al., 1994; Swanson & Horridge, 2006). Further studies have also confirmed that the desire to give gifts to relatives and friends is an effective motivational factor in the shopping behaviour of Chinese tourists. Additionally, experiencing culture (Chen & Tung, 2014; Swanson & Horridge, 2006; Kurlinkus, 2014) and expressing love and identification with local culture (Correia et al., 2013) are significant motivations for these tourists when purchasing cultural souvenirs.

The second is the purchasing attitude. The cultural connotations behind souvenirs (Duan, 2023; Peyer et al., 2017) purchase cultural souvenirs as a meaningful consumption.

Consumers need in-depth cultural products to enrich their lives (Dou, 2020; Sun, 2022). Prices usually reflect their cultural values (Huang et al., 2024). Supporting local artists and craftsmen (Soukhamvong & Park, 2018) plays a crucial role in showcasing the unique charm of a place (Liang & Qi, 2021).

In terms of purchasing behaviour, one study shows that as the world's fastest growing source market for tourism, the shopping behaviour of Chinese tourists has a significant impact on the prosperity of the international tourism industry (Skivalou & Filippidi, 2017), and further research has shown that Chinese tourists are keen on shopping (Jiangfeng & Nongbunnak, 2018), they typically buy when they travel (Petersen, 2009), and are willing to pay higher prices for souvenirs (Park & Reisinger, 2009; Prayag et al., 2015), tend to choose goods with more local characteristics (Peyer et al., 2017), and decide to buy based on quality and cultural value rather than just price.

In addition, although some scholars have noticed that online shopping provides new opportunities for souvenir retail (Shen & Lai, 2022; Sigala, 2020), no researcher has conducted empirical research on the online purchasing intention of Chinese tourists. Therefore, based on the needs of tourists, this research proposes the purchasing behaviour characteristic of "often purchasing cultural souvenirs through online platforms, rather than relying solely on physical stores".

The literature review indicates that personal factors like age, gender, education level, and income greatly influence how tourists buy souvenirs, with these demographic traits having direct and indirect effects on purchasing cultural souvenirs. However, existing studies still lack attention to the Chinese tourist group. This research identified the four most important demographic characteristics that fill this population gap. Since age is one of the

most studied socio-demographic variables (Littrell, 1990) and can significantly predict tourists' purchasing decisions (Anderson & Littrell, 1995; Biswas et al., 2020; Littrell, 1990), and there is a significant correlation between gender and tourists' purchasing behaviour (Anderson & Littrell, 1995; Jansen-Verbeke, 1987), age and gender were identified first.

Secondly, since economic conditions directly determine tourists' demand levels and purchasing power (Qi & Luo, 2005), previous studies have found that high-income tourists spend significantly more than other tourists. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that income level is an important determinant of purchasing decisions. Kay Smith et al. (2022) pointed out that education level affects tourists' preferences when choosing stores to buy souvenirs, so it is reasonable to assume that education level is also an important determinant of purchasing decisions. This research identified income and education as demographic characteristics.

Regarding the control variable perceived authenticity, individuals' perceptions of authenticity may vary significantly, as each tourist may evaluate souvenirs in different ways (Lin & Wang, 2012). Therefore, This research is based on the research model developed by Guo and Zhu (2023) and adapted from it. Perceived authenticity is a complex and multidimensional concept in tourism studies. The previous literature review extensively reviewed the concept, definition, and evaluation criteria of perceived authenticity and its impact on purchasing behaviour in the context of souvenirs. This research integrates some criteria for perceived authenticity of souvenirs and divides them into "authenticity cognition of cultural souvenirs", "purchase behaviour and authenticity", and "attitudes towards imitations". In this model, perceived authenticity is operationalised as a higher-order formative construct reflected by its three interrelated dimensions: "authenticity cognition",

“purchase behaviour and authenticity”, and “attitudes towards imitations”. These dimensions collectively represent the multifaceted nature of authenticity perception. In testing the hypotheses (H4a-c), these dimensions are examined as parallel mediators to elucidate the specific pathways through which design features influence purchase intention.

The literature review demonstrates that the perception of the authenticity of cultural souvenirs can be described as follows: the authenticity of cultural souvenirs is an important criterion for evaluating their value (Swanson & Timothy, 2012; Anastasiadou & Vettese, 2021; Soukhathamammavonga & Park, 2019), the authenticity of cultural souvenirs directly affects my liking for them (Tzeng et al., 2023), authentic cultural souvenirs can better convey local history and culture (Swanson & Timothy, 2012), souvenirs with cultural backgrounds and stories are believed to be more meaningful (Horner, 1993; MacCannell, 2013; Hoffmann & Akbar, 2023), and the authenticity of cultural souvenirs can enhance my identification with the culture of the region (Revilla & Dodd, 2003).

Purchasing behaviour and authenticity can be seen as paying attention to whether it has an authentic cultural background (Goeldener & Ritchie, 2007; Zulaikha & Brereton, 2011), being willing to pay a higher price for authentic cultural souvenirs (Trilling, 2009), being more willing to buy those made by local craftsmen (Wang, 1999), actively asking about its origin and production process, and buying cultural souvenirs through reliable shops or well-known channels (Swanson & Timothy, 2012).

Attitudes towards imitations can be described as knowing that a souvenir is an imitation reduces interest in buying it (Littrell et al., 1993). They prefer to buy authentic souvenirs rather than cheap imitations (Cave et al., 2007). Imitations usually lack Unique

and cultural value. Even if imitations are cheaper (Yeoman et al., 2007), I would still prefer to spend more money to buy authentic cultural souvenirs (Anastasiadou & Vettese, 2019).

The model explains the factors that affect Chinese tourists' behaviour and decision-making patterns in choosing cultural souvenirs, including Chinese tourists' demographic variables, cultural souvenir design features, and perceived authenticity. Peirce's semiotic theory and the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) provide an important foundation for the proposed research framework.

Building upon the integrated theoretical framework established in Section 2.2.3, this conceptual framework explicitly maps the semiotic decoding process onto the TPB decision-making mechanism. The design features of a souvenir, functioning as the semiotic representamen, are interpreted by tourists as pointing to specific cultural meanings (object), which elicits an emotional and cognitive interpretant (e.g., cultural identification or aesthetic appreciation). This interpretant directly constitutes the attitudinal evaluation within the TPB. Furthermore, the social meanings embedded in the design (object) can influence subjective norms (e.g., perceived expectations of peers regarding cultural consumption), while practical aspects of the design (e.g., availability through digital platforms) relate to perceived behavioural control. Thus, the framework posits that semiotics provides the "input" (the source of attitudes, norms, and control perceptions) which the TPB then processes to form a purchase intention.

The theoretical foundation explained in Chapter 2.2 shows how Peirce's semiotic theory helps us understand the mental reasons behind how design features act as symbols that help tourists recognise cultural meanings, leading to emotional reactions and influencing their buying choices. The TPB clarifies how Chinese tourists' purchase intentions are

transformed into purchase behaviours, integrates all relevant variables, and provides a clear view of the interrelationships between the studied constructs.

Figure 2.28, the research model, describes the decision-making processes involved in the design of Chinese tourists' cultural souvenir purchases. The following section explains the relationships between the variables in more detail and refines the hypothesised model.

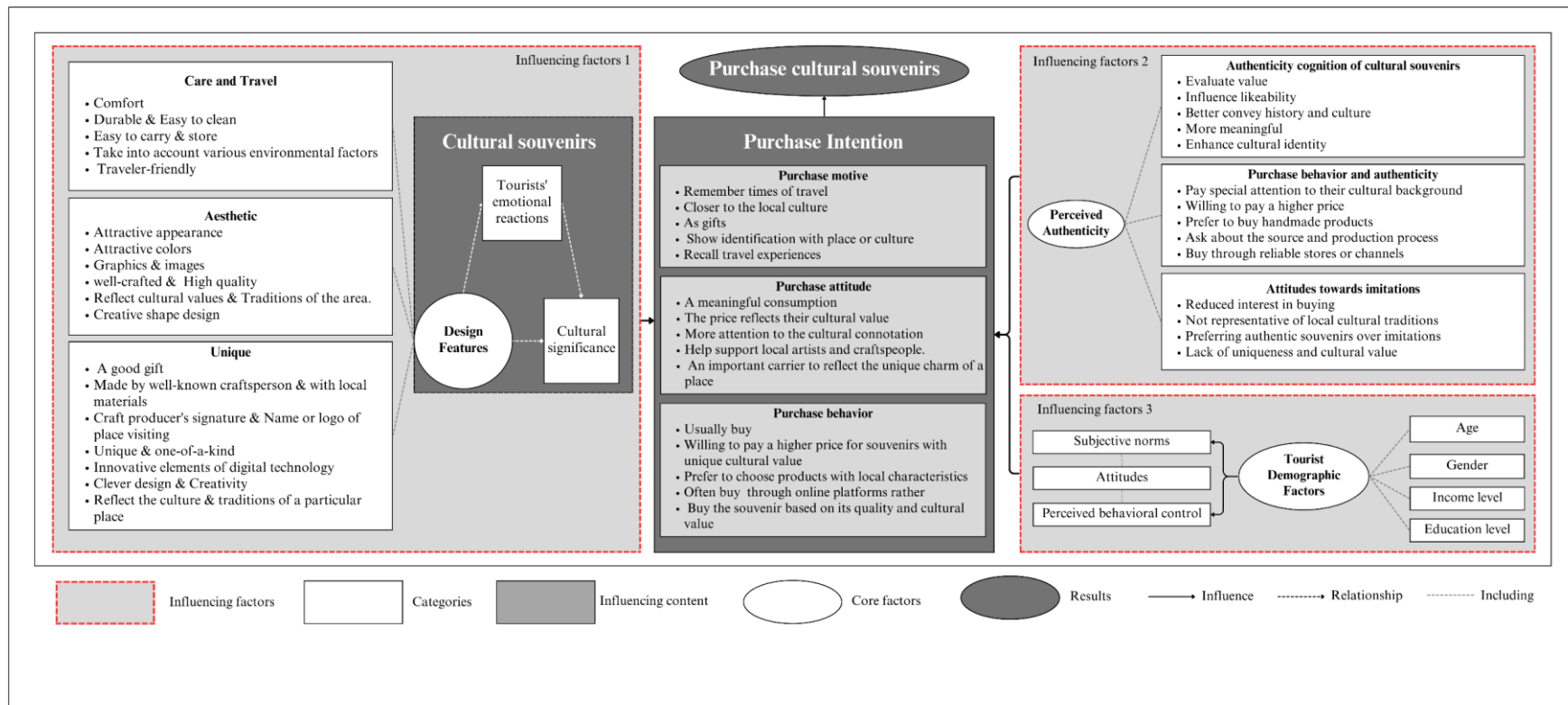


Figure 2.28: Conceptual Framework

2.6.2 Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are derived from the integrated theoretical framework (Figure 2.4), which synergizes Peirce's semiotics and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). This integration is justified because it addresses a key explanatory gap in prior research. Semiotics alone explains how cultural meanings are encoded in design but not how these meanings translate into purchase decisions. Conversely, TPB explains decision-making processes but often treats attitudinal antecedents as a "black box". By combining them, this framework posits that design features (representamen) are decoded into cultural meanings (object) and emotional responses (interpretant), which in turn directly constitute the attitudinal and normative inputs for TPB's decision-making engine. This provides a more complete "meaning-to-action" pathway than either theory alone. Accordingly, the hypotheses are structured to test this sequential logic.

Based on the literature review and the proposed conceptual framework, the following hypotheses are formulated to guide this empirical investigation:

H1: The design features of cultural souvenirs positively impact tourists' purchase intentions.

To test H1, three sub-hypotheses corresponding to the key dimensions of souvenir design (Kim & Littrell, 1999) are proposed:

H1a: The "Care and Travel" dimension (encompassing functionality, durability, portability, and convenience during travel) positively impacts tourists' purchase intentions.

H1b: The "Aesthetic" dimension (pertaining to visual appeal, colour, shape, and the embodiment of cultural artistry) positively impacts tourists' purchase intention.

H1c: The “Unique” dimension (reflecting originality, symbolic meaning, local specificity, and innovative design) positively impacts tourists’ purchase intention.

H2: Tourist’ personal factors (demographics) significantly influence their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs.

H2a: Tourists’ age significantly influences their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs.

H2b: Tourists’ gender significantly influences their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs.

H2c: Tourists’ income level significantly influences their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs.

H2d: Tourists’ educational level significantly influences their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs.

Beyond the direct effect of design, the TPB suggests that personal and social-contextual factors condition behavioural intentions. Therefore, the next set of hypotheses examines the role of tourist demographics. First, we explore their direct influence on design preferences (H2), and subsequently, their moderating role in the core relationship between design and purchase intention (H3), reflecting how demographic factors may alter the strength of the attitudinal and normative pathways proposed by TPB.

H3: Tourists’ personal factors significantly moderate the relationship between the design features of cultural souvenirs and their purchase intentions.

This hypothesis is grounded in theories and empirical studies suggesting that demographic variables can alter the strength of the relationship between product attributes and Behavioural intentions (e.g., Anderson & Littrell, 1995; Kim & Littrell, 2001).

Justification for moderation: Tourists' age is expected to moderate the relationship, as generational cohorts (e.g., digital-native youths vs. tradition-oriented seniors) differ in aesthetic sensibilities and value perceptions (Kim & Littrell, 2001; Mimbs et al., 2020).

H3a: Tourists' age significantly moderates the relationship between design features and purchase intentions.

Tourists' gender is expected to moderate the relationship, given documented differences in shopping motivations, information processing, and product attribute valuation between males and females (Anderson & Littrell, 1995; Combrink & Swanson, 2000).

H3b: Tourists' gender significantly moderates the relationship between design features and purchase intentions.

Tourists' income level is expected to moderate the relationship, as purchasing power and willingness to pay for symbolic vs. functional attributes vary across economic strata (Qi & Luo, 2005; Cakir et al., 2010).

H3c: Tourists' income level significantly moderates the relationship between design features and purchase intentions.

Tourists' educational level is expected to moderate the relationship, as higher education is often associated with greater cultural capital and more discerning evaluation of symbolic meaning and authenticity (Kay Smith et al., 2022; He, 2012).

H3d: Tourists' educational level significantly moderates the relationship between design features and purchase intentions.

Finally, central to the integrated framework is the mechanism that converts symbolic design into purchase intention. Perceived authenticity is theorized as this critical psychological bridge. Hypothesis H4 tests its overall mediating role, with sub-hypotheses (H4a-c) examining three distinct dimensions of this mediation: cognitive evaluation, behavioural orientation, and attitudinal distinction, thereby capturing its multifaceted nature without conceptual redundancy.

H4: The perceived authenticity of cultural souvenirs mediates the relationship between design features and purchase intention.

To test H4, the following sub-hypotheses were formulated to examine the mediating mechanism from cognitive, Behavioural, and attitudinal perspectives (Swanson & Timothy, 2012; Revilla & Dodd, 2003; Cave et al., 2007):

H4a: Tourists' cognitive evaluation of authenticity **mediates** the relationship between design features and purchase intentions.

H4b: Tourists' **behavioural orientation towards authenticity mediates** the relationship between design features and purchase intentions.

H4c: Tourists' attitudinal distinction between authentic souvenirs and mass-produced imitations mediates the relationship between design features and purchase intentions.

The structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis for testing these hypotheses will follow a logically sequenced approach to ensure clarity in interpreting the complex relationships. First, the direct effect of design features on purchase intention (H1) will be established within a baseline model. Subsequently, the mediating role of perceived authenticity (H4) will be tested to examine the psychological mechanism through which design influences intention. Following this, the moderating effects of demographic factors (H3) will be examined, potentially within the mediated model or through multi-group analysis, to understand how the strength of these direct and indirect pathways varies across different tourist segments. Hypothesis H2, concerning the direct influence of demographics on design preferences, will be analysed separately to provide context for the moderation tests. This sequential analytical strategy ensures a systematic deconstruction and interpretation of the integrated theoretical framework.

2.6.3 Literature-Based Justification of Hypotheses

This section provides a detailed literature-based rationale and theoretical reasoning for the research hypotheses presented in the preceding section (2.6.2), elucidating how each hypothesis is logically derived from existing scholarship.

Justification for H1 and its Sub-hypotheses (Direct Effect of Design Features):

A substantial body of empirical research establishes design features as a central factor influencing tourists' purchase decisions. Scholars consistently find that design quality and creativity often exert a stronger influence on purchase intention than price (Hartanti & Wianto, 2024), while homogenised designs lacking local distinctiveness and practical value are proven to significantly dampen buying desire (Wang, 2023). Building upon the classic dimensions established by Kim and Littrell (1999), this study justifies the role of design

features through three specific pathways. First, the “Care and Travel” dimension encompasses functionality, durability, portability, and convenience during travel (Amaro et al., 2020; Turner & Reisinger, 2001). Research confirms that ease of cleaning, carrying, and storage plays a pivotal role in purchase decisions (Kim & Littrell, 1999, 2001; Vasheghani-Farahani et al., 2014) and relates to the comfort and sense of security experienced by tourists (Swanson & Horridge, 2006). Second, the “Aesthetic” dimension involves appearance, colour, form, pattern, and quality of craftsmanship. Visual appeal and high-quality workmanship have long been considered among the most important evaluation criteria for souvenirs (Kim & Littrell, 2001; Swanson & Horridge, 2002, 2004), capable of directly stimulating purchase desire (Littrell et al., 1994; Hu & Yu, 2007) and serving as carriers of regional cultural values and traditional essence (Li & Guo, 2020; Qiu et al., 2024). Finally, the “Unique” dimension refers to a product’s originality, local specificity, and cultural symbolism. Souvenirs with clever concepts, limited editions, craftsmanship by renowned artisans, or embedded distinctive local cultural characteristics are more likely to capture tourist attention and stimulate purchase intention (Wang, 2021; Swanson & Horridge, 2004; Sun, 2019; Zeng, 2019). Consequently, synthesising this literature supports the proposition that design features overall (H1), and their three sub-dimensions (H1a, H1b, H1c), positively impact tourists’ purchase intentions.

Justification for H2 and H3 (The Influence and Moderating Role of Demographic Factors):

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) posits that behavioural intention is conditioned by personal and social-contextual factors. Demographic variables form the basis of these contextual differences, capable of directly shaping preferences (direct effect) and

altering the strength with which other factors (e.g., design features) influence intention (moderating effect). Considerable research attests to significant links between demographic factors and tourist shopping behaviour (Amaro et al., 2016; Jansen-Verbeke, 1987; Yu & Littrell, 2005). Age is a key variable predicting shopping preferences and behaviour, with systematic differences in aesthetics, value perception, and product needs existing across generational cohorts (Kim & Littrell, 2001; Littrell, 1990; Mimbs et al., 2020). Gender similarly leads to marked divergence in preferences, evident in shopping motivations, information processing styles, and the importance placed on product attributes (Anderson & Littrell, 1995; Combrink & Swanson, 2000). Income level directly determines purchasing power and consumption tier, influencing tourists' expectations regarding souvenir price, quality, and symbolic value (Cakir et al., 2010; Qi & Luo, 2005). Education level is linked to cultural capital and connoisseurship, with higher-educated tourists typically paying greater attention to a product's cultural meaning, authenticity, and artistic value (Kay Smith et al., 2022; He, 2012). Based on this, the study hypothesises that demographic factors not only directly influence tourists' preferences for design features (H2 and sub-hypotheses H2a-d) but also play a crucial moderating role in the pathway through which design features affect purchase intention (H3 and sub-hypotheses H3a-d). That is, the sensitivity and mechanism by which tourists from different demographic backgrounds are driven to purchase by design features are posited to differ.

Justification for H4 and its Sub-hypotheses (Mediating Role of Perceived Authenticity):

In the context of cultural consumption, perceived authenticity is a core construct linking a product's objective attributes to the consumer's subjective psychological response.

Research indicates that authenticity perception significantly influences tourist behaviour (He et al., 2023; Jiang et al., 2022) and directly positively affects purchase intention for souvenirs (Deng et al., 2021; Yu et al., 2020). Particularly for cultural souvenirs, value assessment and purchase decisions strongly depend on judgements about their cultural provenance and authenticity (Swanson & Timothy, 2012; Trilling, 2009). This study proposes that a souvenir's design features are the primary semiotic cues for transmitting and shaping authenticity perception. When tourists decode the cultural meanings (object) carried by the design, they form a multi-layered evaluation (interpretant) of whether the product is authentic, original, and possesses cultural integrity. This evaluation process constitutes a multi-faceted psychological mechanism: at the cognitive level, tourists assess whether the souvenir authentically reflects the destination's culture and history (Goeldener & Ritchie, 2007; Swanson & Timothy, 2012); in terms of behavioural orientation, they exhibit a stronger propensity to purchase items that are locally produced, handmade by artisans, and have verifiable provenance (Revilla & Dodd, 2003; Soukhamvong & Park, 2019); regarding attitude, they distinctly differentiate between genuine articles and mass-produced imitations, expressing willingness to pay a premium for the former (Cave et al., 2007; Littrell et al., 1993). Therefore, perceived authenticity is not a unidimensional construct but a composite one encompassing cognitive, behavioural, and attitudinal facets. It serves as an indispensable mediating bridge between design features (semiotic stimulus) and purchase intention (behavioural decision). This supports the overall mediation hypothesis (H4), with the three sub-hypotheses (H4a, H4b, H4c) designed to test the distinct mediating pathways of its different dimensions, thereby comprehensively capturing this complex mechanism without conceptual redundancy.

In summary, all hypotheses (H1 to H4) proposed in this chapter are grounded in robust theoretical and literature foundations, integrated within a coherent framework spanning from “semiotic decoding” to “psychological decision-making”, thus providing a clear logical blueprint for subsequent empirical testing. This research develops a hypothesis framework, as shown in Figure 2.29.

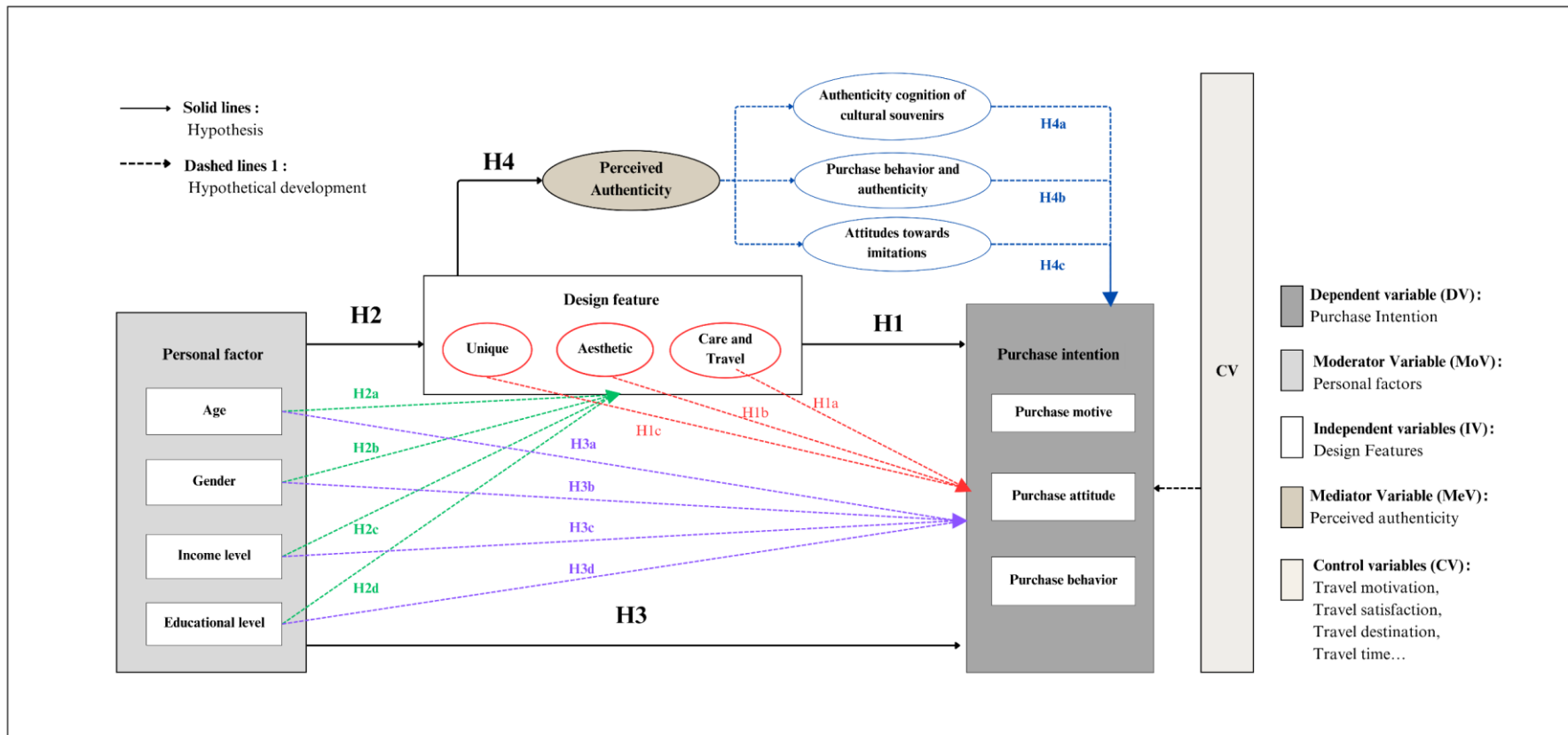


Figure 2.29: Hypothesis Framework

2.7 Critical Analysis and Identification of Contradictions

A critical synthesis of the literature reveals several pivotal debates and theoretical shortcomings that frame the necessity of this research. Firstly, a fundamental tension exists regarding design value: scholars are divided on whether tourists exhibit a stronger preference for traditional, authentic crafts that preserve cultural heritage in its original form, or for modernized, innovative designs that reinterpret cultural symbols for contemporary aesthetics and utility (e.g., the contrast between traditional ICH crafts and Palace Museum lipsticks). This “tradition versus innovation” debate remains unresolved in the Chinese context due to a lack of empirical evidence linking specific design dimensions to behavioural outcomes.

Secondly, the role of perceived authenticity is fraught with conceptual ambiguity. While universally acknowledged as a positive factor, its operationalization is inconsistent. A critical, underexplored question is whether authenticity invariably enhances appeal, or if its effect is contingent on other factors, such as tourist demographics or design modernity. More importantly, its theoretical position is unclear: it is often treated as an independent driver of purchase intention, rather than being investigated as the potential psychological mechanism (mediator) that explains why certain design features influence buying decisions.

Finally, research on Chinese tourist behaviour often presents seemingly contradictory findings, such as the co-existence of preferences for both low-cost trinkets and luxury goods. This paradox highlights a literature that is largely descriptive and fragmented, failing to segment the market based on demographic factors and to theoretically explain how these factors moderate the relationship between product attributes and purchase decisions. This fragmentation underscores a broader issue: the absence of an integrative theoretical

framework that can coherently link cultural semiotics (design as symbol) with established psychological models of decision-making (TPB).

2.8 Research Gap

The preceding review exposes significant analytical deficiencies in the current scholarship. Firstly, a theoretical disjunction persists: studies on cultural symbols (semiotics) and those on purchase behaviour (TPB) operate in parallel, failing to model how symbolic interpretation translates into behavioural intention. Secondly, there is a critical contextual specificity gap: the unique preferences and decision-making processes of Chinese tourists in the cultural souvenir niche remain underexplored, with findings from Western contexts or generic souvenirs often uncritically generalised. Thirdly, the literature is often descriptive rather than analytical, cataloguing influencing factors without sufficiently examining their underlying mechanisms or interactive effects. These collective shortcomings necessitate a more integrated and nuanced investigative framework.

The critical analysis above crystallizes into three specific, interconnected research gaps that This research is designed to address:

The Empirical-Semiotic Gap in Design Research: There is a lack of empirical research that tests the influence of specific, multidimensional design features (“Aesthetic”, “Care and Travel”, “Unique”) on the purchase intentions of Chinese tourists, particularly from a perspective that treats these features as decodable cultural symbols.

The Moderating Mechanism Gap of Demographic Factors: Prior studies have described demographic differences but have not systematically investigated how age, gender, income, and education moderate the relationship between design features and purchase

intention. The conditional role of these variables in shaping design preferences remains underexplored.

The Mediating Pathway Gap of Perceived Authenticity: The literature has consistently overlooked the possibility that perceived authenticity functions as a critical mediating variable that transmits the influence of design features (as cultural symbols) to purchase intention. Understanding this mediating path is key to unlocking the "black box" between stimulus and response.

These gaps collectively point to a significant scholarly omission: the lack of a unified model that integrates semiotics and TPB to explain how design symbols are evaluated, filtered through individual differences, and transformed into behavioural intentions via the internal lens of authenticity.

2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter explains how cultural souvenirs are important in tourism by looking at their meaning, how the market works, the theories behind them, and research on how consumers behave regarding cultural souvenirs. The existing literature indicates that cultural souvenirs serve as both a tangible extension of the tourism experience and a representation of local culture and identity, significantly contributing to cultural exchanges, fostering social cohesion, and safeguarding cultural assets.

Notwithstanding the market's ongoing expansion, the general quality and level of innovation in souvenirs have not improved concurrently. The prevalence of homogeneous items in the market, a lack of regional features and cultural depth, has impeded the industry's continued development. Semiotic theory provides a strong basis for creating cultural

souvenirs, highlighting their role as cultural symbols and their visual appeal, which helps designers create keepsakes that are both meaningful and attractive.

Research on consumer behaviour explains the details of cultural souvenir purchasing decisions, particularly among Chinese tourists whose buying patterns are concurrently shaped by distinct cultural origins, social contexts, digital technologies, and social media platforms. These research findings facilitate a profound understanding of tourists' shopping motivations and selection processes.

Furthermore, the study reveals that design features, demographic characteristics, and perceived authenticity are among the factors that impact purchasing decisions. Their interactive relationship influences consumer preferences and decisions, offering targeted direction for the design and marketing strategies of mementos. This research combined Peirce's semiotics with the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) to create a framework specifically for Chinese tourists (see Section 2.2.4, Figure 2.4), providing a theoretical basis for evaluating cultural souvenirs. The market state study delineates industry development trends and difficulties, while consumer behaviour research offers a theoretical foundation for later empirical investigations.

This review points out gaps in current research, especially the lack of a detailed study on how cultural factors, demographic characteristics, and perceived authenticity affect buying behaviour, which sets This research's primary focus and direction. This research seeks to thoroughly examine Chinese tourists' purchasing behaviour and influencing factors to establish a foundation for developing more targeted product and marketing strategies that effectively address their cultural consumption needs and expectations.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This research adopts a post-positivist research paradigm, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to test the proposed conceptual model. Quantitative data will validate hypotheses, while qualitative insights will contextualise findings (Musa & Aldiabat, 2024). The first two sections of this chapter explain why the study technique was chosen, followed by a discussion of the survey tool (questionnaire) design.

The next part describes the data-gathering procedures utilised for This research, such as questionnaire design and study scope selection. The data collection process is then outlined, followed by a description of the analytical tools (SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 22.0). These tools facilitate descriptive statistics, independent sample t-tests, one-way ANOVA, structural equation modelling (SEM), and mediation analysis. This research also included reliability and validity assessments, exploratory factor analyses, and correlation analyses. Ethical concerns about this research are also highlighted. The final section provides a summary of the chapter.

3.2 Research Philosophy

This research is grounded in a post-positivist philosophy. This paradigm acknowledges an objective reality while recognizing that our understanding of it is inevitably theory-laden and fallible. It supports the use of quantitative data for hypothesis testing to approximate causal relationships, supplemented by qualitative data to provide depth,

context, and explanation for the numerical findings. This philosophical stance justifies the methodological choices detailed in the following sections.

3.3 Research Design

To address the research issues stated in Chapter 1, this research employs a primarily quantitative research design. The core methodology is a standardized questionnaire survey, with data analysis focused on statistical techniques to test hypotheses and examine relationships between variables. This methodological decision is based on the following factors: First, quantitative methods can reach a large number of participants and collect data suitable for generalization (Finn et al., 2000), which is essential for hypothesis testing and evaluating the reliability and validity of constructs (Malhotra, 2006; Zikmund & Babin, 2010). Prior research (e.g., Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018) confirms that souvenir purchases reflect observable behaviours (e.g., frequency of purchase) and measurable cognitive factors (e.g., perceived authenticity), making them amenable to quantitative investigation.

This research adopts a cross-sectional research setting, collecting data at a single point in time from a sample of Chinese tourists. This design is appropriate for examining the relationships between variables (e.g., design features, perceived authenticity, purchase intention) as they exist within the population at the time of the study, aligning with the research objectives of model testing and hypothesis verification. In terms of research purpose, the study is primarily explanatory (or causal-predictive), aiming to test a theoretical model that proposes causal (or predictive) pathways between key constructs. It seeks to explain how design features influence purchase intention, both directly and through the mediating mechanism of perceived authenticity, while also examining the moderating role of personal

factors. While descriptive analysis of sample characteristics and variable distributions is included, the core analytical focus remains on explaining these hypothesized relationships.

Guided by a post-positivist research paradigm as outlined in section 3.1, this design acknowledges an objective reality while utilizing systematic, empirical methods to approximate it. The paradigm supports the use of quantitative measures, statistical controls, and hypothesis testing to investigate potential causal mechanisms, while remaining open to the refinement of theories based on empirical evidence. Three key factors justify the quantitative approach: (1) Literature shows a predominance of quantitative methods in tourism studies (Bernardo et al., 2023; see Appendix I), including research on souvenir shopping. (2) A standardized questionnaire is efficient for large-scale data collection (Zikmund et al., 2011) and compatible with Likert-scale analysis (Finn et al., 2000). (3) The primary research objectives and the conceptual model are fundamentally quantitative in nature, aiming to measure effects and test relationships statistically.

The primary tool for this investigation was a standardised questionnaire survey. A standardised questionnaire was chosen for its efficiency in large-scale data collection (Zikmund et al., 2011) and compatibility with Likert-scale analysis (Finn et al., 2000), with item design optimised through pre-testing (N=75). The formal survey collected 620 valid responses, and the data was analysed using SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 22.0, which included (1) exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to check if the scale was structured correctly; (2) hierarchical regression analysis to see how demographic factors influenced the results; and (3) the bootstrap method to examine the role of perceived authenticity. Hair et al. (2006) argued that, if possible, researchers should employ scales proven as reliable indicators to

address validity and reliability concerns. Consequently, this research used a scale that had previously been used and validated (see Appendix K for details).

While this study is fundamentally quantitative, it incorporates a supplementary component for richer interpretation: two optional open-ended questions were included at the end of the questionnaire. This approach is consistent with a quantitatively-driven design that seeks explanatory depth (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The primary rationale for the quantitative emphasis lies in its efficacy in testing the hypothesized model and establishing generalizable patterns (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The qualitative data (N=320 valid text responses) were reviewed and thematically organized to provide illustrative insights and contextual nuance, particularly for understanding complex constructs like design preferences and authenticity perceptions. It is important to clarify that this does not constitute a full, parallel qualitative study phase, but rather the collection of auxiliary textual data to support and illuminate the quantitative findings. This ensures the statistical rigor and generalizability of the core analysis while adding a layer of explanatory context to the interpretation of results.

3.4 Sample Design

3.4.1 Population and Sampling

The target population for this study is conceptually defined as all Chinese nationals who have undertaken domestic travel. The accessible population, from which the sample was drawn, is further specified as Chinese tourists with domestic travel experience who are users of online survey platforms within the sampling frame of this study. This delineation aligns the sampling strategy with the research objective of understanding the decision-making processes of this broad consumer group.

This research aims to investigate the determinants influencing Chinese tourists' decisions when acquiring cultural souvenirs. To focus on the target demographic, participants lacking domestic travel experience (as determined by the screening questions) were excluded. Consequently, this research focuses on Chinese tourists who have actually participated in tourism activities, rather than residents of a particular tourist city. Residents in these cities may not have travelled to purchase cultural souvenirs; thus, their behaviour and decision-making may differ from those of tourists.

So, should the subjects have bought cultural souvenirs? This research argues that, whether they made a purchase, they should be included in the scope of the research subjects. This selection is based on the following considerations:

- The study can compare tourists who buy cultural souvenirs to those who do not, identifying important elements that influence purchasing behaviour.
- Even if a tourist does not make a purchase, they may have gone through the entire decision-making process, which can reveal the underlying reasons and disincentives to buy.
- Researching the behaviours and attitudes of non-purchasing tourists can reveal unmet needs and possible growth prospects in the market, which is helpful for retailers and policymakers.
- Analysing non-buying tourists' behaviour and attitudes helps anticipate their likelihood of purchasing once conditions change, which helps develop market strategies.

- A greater sample size can increase a study's statistical power, making its findings more robust and reliable.

As a result, including Chinese tourists who did not purchase cultural souvenirs in the study will ensure that the data collected is more representative and reliable. Such a sample can more accurately reflect the current state of tourist shopping behaviour. Finally, the research subject of This research is precisely specified as **“Chinese tourists who have had domestic travel experience in China”**.

Many scholars choose 1-3 target cities for questionnaire surveys in the same type of research. However, given China's massive population and extensive land area, the research scope of This research has been broadened to include China as a whole, rather than specific provinces or cities. This decision is based on the following factors:

- China encompasses an area of approximately 9.6 million square kilometres, possesses a substantial population, and exhibits pronounced regional economic disparities (for instance, as illustrated in Figure 3.1, there exists a notable GDP gap between coastal and inland regions), thereby necessitating a nationwide sampling to examine diverse behaviours accurately.
- Defining the scope of the study as China aids in focusing research resources while addressing a wide range of geographical and demographic features.

models need to be verified by large samples, as small samples are less stable for appraisal views (Hair et al., 2010). Jackson (2003) claims that the N:q rule can be used to estimate the number of samples required. N is the number of samples, and p is the parameter that must be estimated in the model. The recommended ratio is 20:1; however, it can be adjusted to 10:1. Bentler and Chou (1987) also said that the ratio of the number of samples to the estimated parameters must be at least 5:1 to assure the reliability of parameter estimates and 10:1 to ensure the validity of significance tests.

Barrett (2007) recommended that a sample size should be over 200, unless the overall number of investigations is carefully limited. Although the guideline is not an absolute standard, it demonstrates that SEM requires a large sample size. As a result, 10:1 is the ratio used to compare insurance, and q in This research is 61; thus, 610 is a fair sample size based on the ratio.

The diverse sample sizes advised by several researchers were considered suitable (see Appendix). Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) assert that "384 sample sizes are sufficient, irrespective of the population to represent". According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), accounting for a projected attrition rate of 20%, the objective of 610 replies corresponds to a 95% confidence level. Consequently, the definitive sample size for this investigation was 610. This distribution guarantees that the study sample spans a larger area and that there is sufficient data to analyse tourist behaviours and preferences across regions.

3.4.3 Sampling Procedure

In this research, online surveys were sent via China's Wenjuanxing platform, and convenience sampling, a non-probabilistic sampling method, was used. While convenience sampling limits generalisability, it was deemed appropriate for this research for several

reasons. Firstly, the primary goal was theoretical model testing rather than population parameter estimation (Reynolds et al., 2003; Leary, 2012). Secondly, the Wenjuanxing platform's sophisticated demographic targeting features (e.g., filtering by age, geographic location, and travel history) were employed to enhance the sample's diversity and representativeness within the constraints of a non-probability sample. This approach effectively simulated a stratified sampling strategy, aiming to enhance coverage across key demographic segments of Chinese domestic tourists.

Reynolds et al. (2003) proposed that non-probabilistic sampling is suitable for theoretical testing. Leary (2012) also advocates non-probability sampling, claiming it is appropriate for testing hypotheses concerning the relationship between certain variables and behaviour. Furthermore, Leary (2012) argues that non-probabilistic samples might provide evidence to support or refute the theory under test, regardless of their nature. There are various reasons for selecting this approach:

- Because Chinese tourists are a giant group with a wide geographical distribution, offline questions may not cover all prospective respondents, whereas internet questionnaires can easily reach interviewees nationwide.
- Chinese tourists of various ages may have diverse online activity patterns, and online questionnaires can be better tailored to the preferences of respondents of different ages, particularly young people, who are more acclimatised to utilising the Internet and smart devices.
- Issuing surveys offline may incur substantial costs, such as printing, staffing, and logistics, but online questionnaires can significantly cut these costs.

- Online questionnaires may be delivered and collected quickly, increasing the efficiency of data collection.
- Data from online questionnaires can be collected and saved electronically, making it easier to analyse and handle later.
- Online questionnaire platforms such as “Wenjuanxing” offer convenient tools for setting “screening questions” and generating questionnaire two-dimensional codes with a single click and forwarding them to WeChat and other popular social platforms among Chinese people, making questionnaire design, distribution, and data collection easier.

Non-probabilistic sampling, especially convenience sampling, provides the benefits of ease of use and low cost. However, it also has the drawback of producing a sample that is not representative. However, the “screening question setting” feature given by the “Wenjuanxing” platform contributes to the sample’s representativeness and accuracy. This feature is critical to ensuring the validity of the findings. These services assisted This research to overcome the limits of non-probabilistic sampling by aiming to approximate a more representative sample of the target population.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

This research received ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. The first page of the online questionnaire clearly outlined the research purpose, assured anonymity and confidentiality, emphasized the voluntary nature of participation and the right to withdraw at any time, and provided researcher contact

information. Participants proceeded to the questionnaire only after acknowledging this information.

Data were collected using the Wenjuanxing platform, whose technical features (e.g., screening questions, demographic targeting, and anti-duplication measures) are detailed in Section 3.4.3. The platform's "sample service" was employed to reach a broad user base, with over 10 million daily active users.

This research collected the data between 12 October and 19 November 2024. The data collection process resulted in 621 initial submissions. After removing one invalid questionnaire (failed screening question), 620 valid responses were retained for analysis. This represents a high effective response rate, considering the targeted sampling and screening criteria. To minimize duplicate responses, the Wenjuanxing platform utilizes technical measures such as IP address monitoring and cookie restrictions. To address potential response bias, particularly social desirability bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003), several strategies were employed: (1) ensuring respondent anonymity was explicitly stated in the survey instructions; (2) incorporating an attention check question to filter out inattentive respondents; and (3) using a carefully designed screening question at the outset to ensure respondents met the core eligibility criterion (having domestic travel experience).

Following the survey, the received questionnaires were thoroughly examined and checked using attention test questions to confirm that the questionnaires completed by tourists matched the criteria for the primary data. Each closed question in Parts A-E of the questionnaire is qualified, allowing 620 samples to be used for quantitative analysis such as SEM.

The researchers collected the responses from the two open-ended questions in Part F of the questionnaire into different files and manually grouped them. However, not all respondents provided constructive ideas, probably because open-ended questions take more time and effort to complete, resulting in a lower response rate than closed-ended ones, which is a common pattern. The responses to the open-ended questions of the 300 respondents in This research were eliminated for “not filling in” or “padding out” and the remaining 320 legitimate open-ended questions were used in the subsequent analysis.

3.6 Instrumentation and Measurement Development

In terms of developing survey methods for measuring constructs, Hair et al. (2006) proposed that researchers may use the literature to apply the construct if it provides adequate discussion. Utilising existing variable measurements that are well-supported in the literature should increase the accuracy of the measurements' content.

However, when past studies are lacking, researchers should create their measurement metrics (Hair et al., 2010). We employed the following measures in this investigation to establish a reliable measurement scale. First and foremost, this research thoroughly evaluates and analyses the relevant literature on cultural souvenirs' design and purchase choices, as it focuses on the determinants of the design of souvenirs purchased by tourists.

Second, current research uses items to measure content and indicates the definition and dimension of constructs. As discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2), the constructs investigated in this work were well defined. This research employs the scales of previous studies that assessed design elements, perceived authenticity, and souvenir purchasing behaviour. The following sections explain and explore these constructs' specific measurement scale items.

A literature review informs the selection of measurement items. We review and adjust the scale to better reflect Chinese thinking and linguistic patterns, considering the context of cultural souvenir design and buying decisions. The questionnaire contains dependent, independent, moderating, and mediating variables.

All scales are based on prior research (see Appendix K). Since the scale employed in This research has been utilised in prior investigations, its validity and reliability have been validated and confirmed. Secondly, the tourism and souvenir industries use these scales, as This research does. However, the downside is that they are primarily utilised in Western cultural settings, and the previous souvenir characteristics scale does not address the features in the context of cultural souvenirs. We made modifications based on the preceding two criteria, considering the current situation in China. As a result, this research altered the phrasing of the scale's items.

The selection and adaptation of scale items were explicitly guided by the study's theoretical frameworks. Peirce's semiotic theory informed the measurement of design features' (Representamen) and their interpretation, which links to perceived authenticity and purchase intention (Interpretant). The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) underpinned the structure of the purchase intention construct, encompassing attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. For instance, items measuring the motivation to buy souvenirs as gifts reflect subjective norms, while those assessing the influence of price and availability align with perceived behavioural control. This ensures a coherent thread from theoretical concepts to empirical measurement.

Many questions concerning tourists' attitudes towards buying cultural souvenirs require a rating scale to analyse the responses, and closed-ended questions vary based on

how they are answered (Finn et al., 2000). The 5-point Likert scale was selected for inclusion in the questionnaire since it is widely used and among the most easily comprehensible (Finn et al., 2000). The questionnaire assesses five evaluation scores using the following criteria:

- Score 1 = very inappropriate
- Score 2 = inappropriate
- Score 3 = neutral
- Score 4 = appropriate
- Score 5 = very appropriate

3.6.1 Questionnaire Design

This section explains the development of the questionnaire utilised in the current study's data collection. The discussion is divided into four parts: questionnaire design, questionnaire structure, questionnaire translation and back-translation, and questionnaire pre-testing procedures.

A structured questionnaire design categorises factors into four groups: design qualities, demographic characteristics (such as age), perceived authenticity, and purchase intention. Multiple-choice, Likert scale, and two open-ended questions are used to assist quantitative analysis of the subsequent data.

The questionnaire was meticulously crafted to minimise ambiguity: (1) a pre-test involving 77 respondents revealed unclear phrasing; (2) an expert review by two tourism scholars enhanced item clarity; (3) screening questions eliminated inattentive respondents.

Foddy (2001) asserts that questions should be constructed to ensure mutual comprehension between the researcher and the respondents. Zikmund et al. (2011) recommended a well-designed questionnaire technique that this research used in This research. It employs simple questions to decrease uncertainty and ambiguity.

Questionnaires are limited to six pages to balance the depth and engagement; exceeding this risks survey fatigue (Zikmund & Babin, 2010), while shorter forms may omit critical variables. The questionnaire is divided into six sections, totalling 63 questions (see Appendix J). These questions are chosen to provide the necessary information, and the majority are closed or multiple-choice since they are simple to answer and analyse (Finn et al., 2000).

This research uses a screening question at the beginning of the 63 questions to identify the initial research participants. To determine the validity of the answers, the questionnaire includes one attention test question randomly placed to verify respondents' attention. To ensure the accuracy of the research findings, this research can screen out respondents who provide insincere replies and eliminate those who provide random answers during subsequent data collection. This research uses the latter two open-ended questions to supplement the closed questions about complex matters.

The questionnaire for this research was systematically organised, progressing from demographic enquiries (Section A) to open-ended questions (Section F), thus minimising cognitive burden (Malhotra, 2006). Since some respondents may not have received much formal education, the questionnaire questions and instructions were written in plain and neutral language. Finally, all questions were phrased positively.

In addition to screening and attention test questions, the questionnaire is divided into six sections (see Appendix J). Specific design considerations include the following:

- i. **Screening question:** To ensure that the questionnaire for This research successfully targets Chinese tourists who have undertaken domestic trips, the following screening question is placed at the beginning of the questionnaire: “Have you ever travelled? (Domestic travel)”. If respondents answer “Yes”, they proceed to complete the questionnaire. If the respondent selects “No,” this research closes the questionnaire and express our gratitude for their participation.
- ii. **Attention detection question:** This research randomly inserts an attention detection question near the middle of the questionnaire to ensure that respondents complete the survey carefully. “Did you fill in this questionnaire carefully?” A “Yes” response indicates the questionnaire is a valid sample. If you select “No”, the questionnaire will be considered invalid.
- iii. **Section A:** This section includes six questions regarding respondents’ demographics, including gender, tourist category, nationality, age, education, occupation, and monthly income. Income categories align with China’s 2023 wage data (NBS, 2024b), ensuring options reflect actual earning distributions (e.g., <3,596 RMB/month = “low income”). Age groups are divided into six categories based on similar studies and take into account China’s specific situation, especially regarding education levels, job stages, and retirement rules (Appendix O).
- iv. **Section B:** This section aims to gather respondents’ travel patterns through six questions addressing travel purpose, souvenir purchase locations, type of

memento selected, purpose of souvenir purchase, souvenir materials, travel experience, and other relevant details.

- v. **Section C:** This section contains 18 questions on the design features of mementos. The scale's design features are primarily adopted from Yi et al. (2022) (Appendix K, Table 1), who classified features into three dimensions: care and travel, aesthetic, and unique. Because the target audience is Chinese tourists, This research compared Chinese and English references and refined the description of design features accordingly (Appendix K, Table 2).
- vi. **Section D:** This section includes 15 questions that assess the magnitude of purchasing intention for cultural souvenirs, divided into three dimensions: purchase motive, purchase attitude, and purchase behaviour. The items for purchase motive, purchase attitude, and purchase behaviour were adapted from established scales in tourism and consumer behaviour literature (e.g., Swanson & Horridge, 2006; Kim & Littrell, 2001; see Appendix K for details).
- vii. **Section E:** This section examines tourists' perceptions of the authenticity of souvenirs, which are divided into three dimensions: the authenticity cognition of cultural souvenirs, purchase behaviour, and attitudes towards imitations. The items for these dimensions were adapted from established scales in authenticity and souvenir research (e.g., Guo & Zhu, 2023; Soukhamavong & Park, 2019; see Appendix K for details).
- viii. **Section F:** This section contains two open-ended questions designed to elicit respondents' personal preferences for cultural souvenirs and suggestions for improvement.

3.7 Translation of Research Instruments

Social, educational, and particularly cultural disparities may result in varied interpretations of questions by respondents (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The initial questionnaire for This research was composed in Chinese, and back-translation by bilingual specialists ensured linguistic equivalence. Discrepancies, such as subtleties about “authenticity”, were reconciled through consensus (Brislin, 1986). This research was subsequently rendered into English. Consequently, the questionnaire underwent translation and back-translation prior to its final distribution.

We completed the following procedures for back-translation and questionnaire translation. An authorised individual in China who is bilingual and knowledgeable about both Chinese and English cultures translated the questionnaire from Chinese into English. Another authorised Chinese Malaysian who speaks both Chinese and English performed the back-translation to guarantee that the meanings in both languages are consistent. This process removes bias and ensures the consistency and content equivalence of the questionnaire translation. Despite back-translation, specific terms may carry cultural nuances.

3.8 Pre-test and Pilot Test

The questionnaire was pre-tested to identify any confusing questions or difficulties respondents might have in understanding it. Following Malhotra’s (2006) recommendations, a panel of experts was convened to provide valuable input for the questionnaire’s development and to assess its content validity. First, two experts were invited: one a senior scholar specializing in tourism marketing and consumer behavior, and the other a professional designer with extensive experience in cultural product development. They were

selected for their complementary expertise to assess the draft questionnaire to enhance its face validity and content validity. Their expertise ensured that the items adequately covered the theoretical domains of semiotics, TPB, and cultural souvenir consumption. The scholar evaluated the theoretical alignment and construct validity of the items, while the designer assessed the clarity and practical relevance of the design-feature descriptions from a user perspective. The questionnaire was revised based on their feedback and suggestions regarding item relevance, clarity, and comprehensiveness.

Following Hilton's (2017) advice, this research sent 77 questionnaires using the Wenjuanxing platform from October 5 to 9, 2024, 10–20% of the target sample (N=77). The pilot test respondents were recruited through the same platform's sampling service, with screening criteria (Chinese, domestic travel experience) identical to the main study to ensure sample representativeness. The questionnaire was tested beforehand to ensure it was reliable (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.7$) (Sürücü & Maslakci, 2015). All 77 respondents completed the questionnaire, yielding 75 valid responses. The finalised questionnaire indicated that the language and instructions were thoroughly understood. We converted the open questions in Part B, which included journey time and information sources, into closed questions. This pilot phase served not only to test reliability but also to estimate average completion time and identify any technical or logical issues in the survey flow prior to full-scale deployment.

3.9 Statistical Analysis

The choice of analytical methods in the study is important. Several steps are performed in the current study to process the data for analysis and ultimately test hypotheses. To clearly demonstrate the correspondence between the research methodology and the

research objectives, This research aligns the analytical techniques with the research questions as follows (for a more detailed design process refer to Figure 3.1):

RQ1 (The influence of design features on purchase intention) is examined using structural equation modelling (SEM) and thematic analysis.

RQ2 (The influence of demographic variables) is investigated through analysis of variance (ANOVA), t-tests, structural equation modelling (SEM), and hierarchical regression analysis.

RQ3 (The mediating role of perceived authenticity) is assessed via correlation analysis and Bootstrap mediation effect testing.

The first is quantitative analysis. The statistical techniques used in This research for data analysis involved descriptive analysis, t-tests, ANOVA, EFA, CFA, and SEM, as discussed in more detail in the subsequent sections. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 22 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and AMOS version 22 (Analysis of Moment Structures). SPSS was used to perform statistical analyses such as descriptive analysis, t-tests, ANOVA, and EFA, while AMOS was used to perform SEM and bootstrap mediation effect analysis.

The next step is qualitative analysis. Manual coding is used in this research to carry out thematic analysis. Manual coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was preferred over software (e.g., NVivo) to capture colloquial nuances (For detailed steps, see Section 4.7). The effective sample size for the qualitative analysis section of This research is 320. Manual processing is viable and can guarantee a thorough understanding of each response. Tourists' open-ended responses are colloquial and unstructured (e.g., "I hope the souvenirs have local

characteristics, preferably handicrafts”). Manual coding allows for a more flexible capture of implicit meanings and avoids mechanical faults that occur when software automatically codes. Many high-quality studies rely on human coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The database for this survey is built from an Excel spreadsheet exported from “Wenjuanxing” to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the data.

The analytical methods were aligned with the research objectives: descriptive statistics were used to profile the sample and address Objective 1 (demographic analysis), while inferential techniques - including t-tests, ANOVA, SEM, and mediation analysis - were employed to test the hypothesized relationships among variables, corresponding to Objectives 2 through 4 and the proposed conceptual model.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has delineated the comprehensive methodology employed to investigate the research questions. It commenced by explicating the post-positivist research philosophy underpinning the study. Prioritizing quantitative analysis supplemented by qualitative insights, was justified. The sample design detailed the target population (Chinese domestic tourists), the determined sample size (N=620), and the online convenience sampling procedure. The data collection procedure using the Questionnaire Star platform was described. The development of the research instrument, including questionnaire design based on adapted scales, was presented, followed by an account of its translation and pilot testing. Finally, the planned statistical analyses (both quantitative and qualitative) were outlined. This rigorous methodological framework establishes a solid foundation for the data analysis and findings presented in the subsequent chapter.

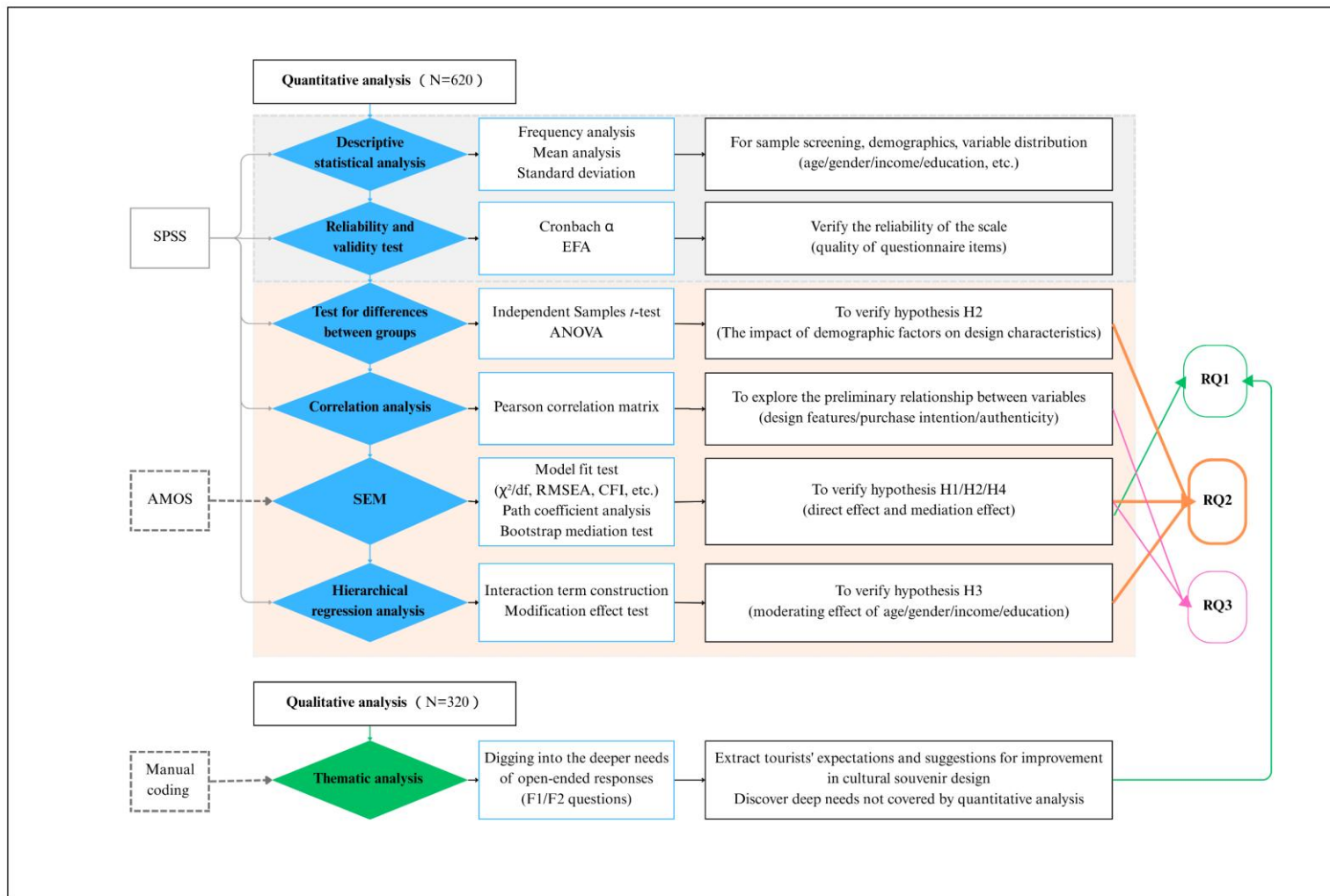


Figure 3.2: Methods of Data Analysis

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 elaborates on the research methodology, questionnaire design, data collection process, and analytical strategies employed in This research, establishing the methodological foundation for the empirical investigation. Building upon this framework, this chapter will systematically present the data analysis results, introduce the quantitative and qualitative findings, and subsequently proceed to hypothesis testing and discussion.

First, a quantitative analysis is conducted. This research used SEM to verify hypotheses about the impact of design characteristics (care and travel, aesthetics, and Unique) on purchasing intention. Variance analysis and t-tests were used to investigate the influence of age, gender, income, and education on design preferences. Indirect effect analysis was used to determine perceived authenticity's mediating role between design features and purchasing intention, completing the fourth set of hypotheses.

Prior to completing the quantitative analysis, this research conducted a descriptive statistical analysis of demographic factors to determine the sample's diversity and representativeness. A survey of respondent data was created to emphasise the distribution of various demographic variables in the sample. To ensure the measurement tool's reliability, this research conducted item analyses of the various indicators in the questionnaire and reliability tests to assess the scale's internal consistency (for a detailed data flow diagram, see Section 4.8, Figure 4.16).

The second step involved qualitative analysis. In addition to testing hypotheses, this chapter concludes with a hand-coded analysis of the responses to two open-ended questions in the questionnaire to discover tourist preferences and enhance recommendations.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

4.2.1 Screening Question Analysis

This research used questionnaire screening questions to identify respondents' travel experiences. As shown in Table 4.1, 620 of the 621 respondents claimed to have travelled, whereas only one stated that they had never done so. Respondents with no travel experience were excluded from the subsequent analysis, resulting in a final effective sample size of 620.

Table 4.1: Screening Question Analysis

Indicator	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Have you ever traveled?	Yes	620	99.84	99.84
	No	1	0.16	100
Total		621	100	100

4.2.2 Respondent Information Survey Analysis

This research systematically described the demographic characteristics of 620 valid samples (Table 4.2). The findings revealed that the samples shared the following characteristics in terms of age, gender, income, education, and occupation distribution.

Table 4.2: Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Profiles	Total No.	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Age (N=620)			
Under 18	14	2.26	2.26
18 - 25	165	26.61	28.87
26 - 34	127	20.48	49.35
35 - 49	140	22.58	71.94
50 - 55	161	25.97	97.9
56 and above	13	2.10	100.00
Gender (N=620)			
Male	367	59.19	59.19
Female	253	40.81	100
Monthly income(N=620)			
Less than RMB 3,500	38	6.13	6.13
RMB 3,501 - 4,000	232	37.42	43.55
RMB 4,001 - 6,000	122	19.68	63.23
RMB 6,001 - 8,000	112	18.06	81.29
RMB 8,001 - 12,000	83	13.39	94.68
More than RMB 12,000	33	5.32	100.00
Education (N=620)			
High School	51	8.23	8.23
Associate Degree	203	32.74	40.97
Bachelor Degree	205	33.06	74.03
Master Degree	114	18.39	92.42
Doctoral Degree	47	7.58	100.00
Occupation (N=620)			
Student	41	6.61	6.61
Civil servants/state enterprise employees	212	34.19	40.81
Housewife/husband	73	11.77	52.58
Retiree	37	5.97	58.55
Business owner	114	18.39	76.94
Peasantry	30	4.84	81.77
Private employees	96	15.48	97.26
Other	17	2.74	100.00

Age distribution: Respondents are aged 18-55 (97.9% in total), with the two peak groups being 18-25 (26.61%) and 50-55 (25.97%), followed by 35-49 (22.58%) and 26-34 (20.48%). The proportions of respondents under 18 (2.26%) and over 56 (2.1%) were

negligible, confirming the sample's focus on working-age adults and closely related to the target demographic of the research issue (i.e., purchase decision).

It is noteworthy that the sample includes 14 respondents (2.26%) under the age of 18. Although the screening criteria for this study only required participants to have domestic travel experience and did not set a lower age limit, it is recognised that the consumption behaviour of minors may be influenced by parents, and their purchasing independence differs from that of adults. To examine whether this subgroup affects the overall findings, a sensitivity analysis was conducted by re-running the SEM model after excluding underage respondents. The results showed that the path coefficients and hypothesis testing conclusions remained consistent, indicating that the inclusion of underage respondents did not introduce significant bias into the research outcomes. Therefore, retaining this subset of respondents contributes to enhancing the diversity and ecological validity of the sample.

Gender distribution: Male respondents accounted for 59.19%, and female respondents accounted for 40.81%, showing a trend of slightly more males than females, reflecting specific differences in gender distribution.

Monthly income distribution: Respondents with an income of RMB 3,501-4,000 made up the most significant share (37.42%), followed by RMB 4,001-6,000 (19.68%) and RMB 6,001-8,000 (18.06%). The proportion of high-income groups (income exceeding RMB 8,000) was relatively low, with only 5.32% having a monthly income exceeding RMB 12,000, indicating that the majority of respondents' income was concentrated in the middle and low-income levels, implying that the sample group's economic conditions were relatively diverse.

Education level distribution: The proportion of respondents with college (32.74%) and bachelor’s degree (33.06%) education reached 65.8%, and those with master’s (18.39%) and doctorate (7.58%) education also accounted for a certain proportion. The educational level of the respondents was concentrated in college and bachelor’s degrees, indicating that the sample group had a relatively high education level.

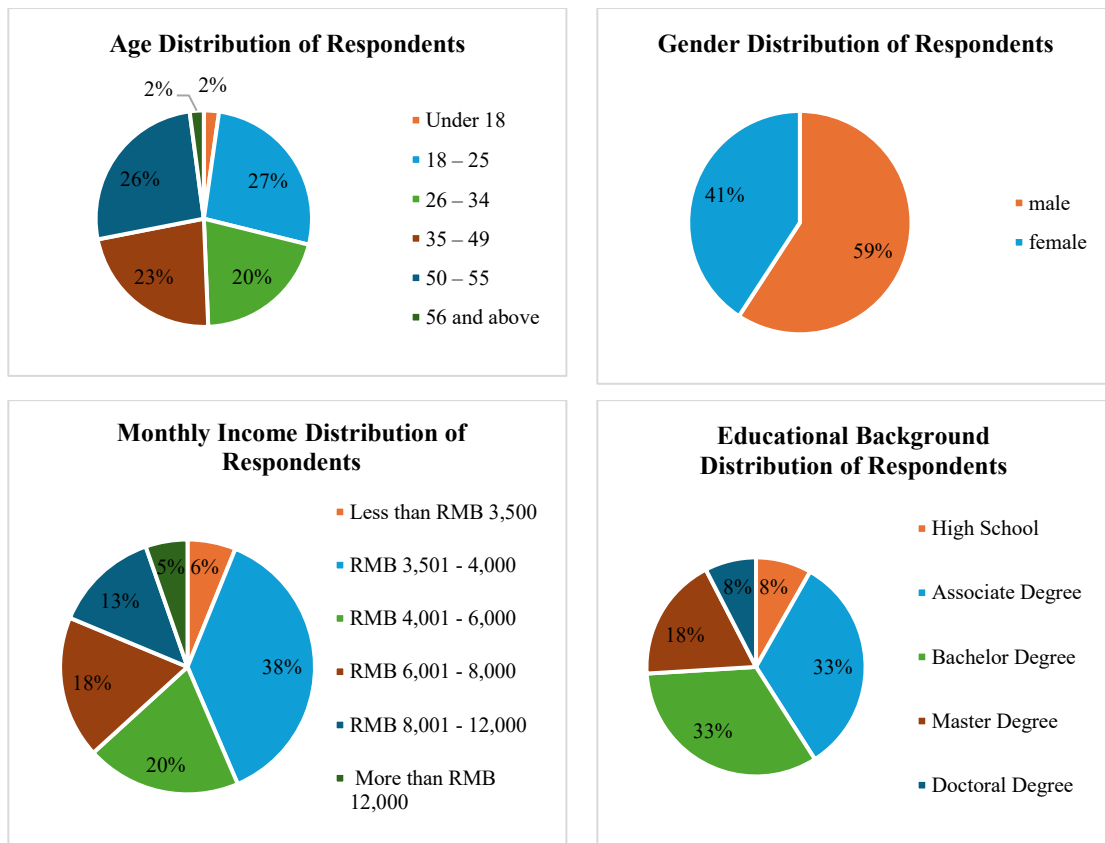


Figure 4.1: Visualisation of Respondent Demographics

Occupational distribution: The occupational distribution includes the major categories of civil servants/state-owned enterprise employees (34.19%), private enterprise employees (15.48%), and business owners (18.39%), as well as students, retirees, and others. The respondents’ occupational types were evenly distributed, representing various social groups. The diversified occupational structure helps to capture the differences in tourism needs of different social roles.

This research focuses on four demographic characteristics and conducts a visual analysis of them (Figure 4.1), demonstrating their distribution disparities more logically.

4.2.3 B Item Result Analysis

4.2.3.1 Travel Motivation Analysis

Table 4.3 shows a frequency analysis of respondents’ travel motivations, indicating that the visit intentions of the samples in this research are diverse.

The primary motivations are leisure and social needs. Most respondents (69.35%) cite “leisure and relaxation” as their primary travel motivators, emphasising tourism's essential function of relieving stress and enjoying leisure time. Secondly, “social needs” (46.61%) accounted for a substantial proportion, demonstrating that travel is a personal experience and an important vehicle for social interaction, which may be linked to the rising demand for interpersonal relationships in modern society.

Table 4.3: Results of Frequency Analysis of Item B1

B1. What is your main purpose for visiting the destination? (N=620)	Total No.	Percentage (%)
Vacation/Leisure	430	69.35
Business/Work	130	20.97
Shopping	136	21.94
Visiting friends and relatives	200	32.26
Cultural event	143	23.06
Family/Family activities	221	35.65
Social need	289	46.61
Purposelessness	38	6.13
Other	73	11.77

Based on the results obtained, it can be concluded that families and cultures influence travel behaviours. The high proportion of family activities (35.65%) and visits to relatives and friends (32.26%) demonstrates the importance of prioritising family bonds in travel

plans. The proportion of respondents motivated by “exploring new cultures” (23.06%) shows that some respondents enrich their cultural understanding through travel, which aligns with tourism’s theoretical connotation as a cultural consumption behaviour.

Functional and consumer demands coexist. Although leisure and social connection are predominant, the proportions of respondents citing “business/work” (20.97%) and “shopping” (21.94%) show that travel has both functional and consumer aspects. Business travel groups emerge to satisfy the liquidity requirements of economic activity. In contrast, the commercial appeal of a destination may directly influence shopping motivations.

Special and unclassified motivations are also included. A small percentage of respondents answered “no clear purpose” (6.13%) or “other” (11.77%), implying that certain travel behaviours are motivated by ephemeral and personalised demands or that the questionnaire answers do not fully capture their motivations. These findings indicate that future research should refine the classification or incorporate qualitative methodologies to investigate the underlying motivations. Travel reasons exhibit major stratification characteristics: leisure and social connection are central, supplemented by functional needs such as family, culture, and business.

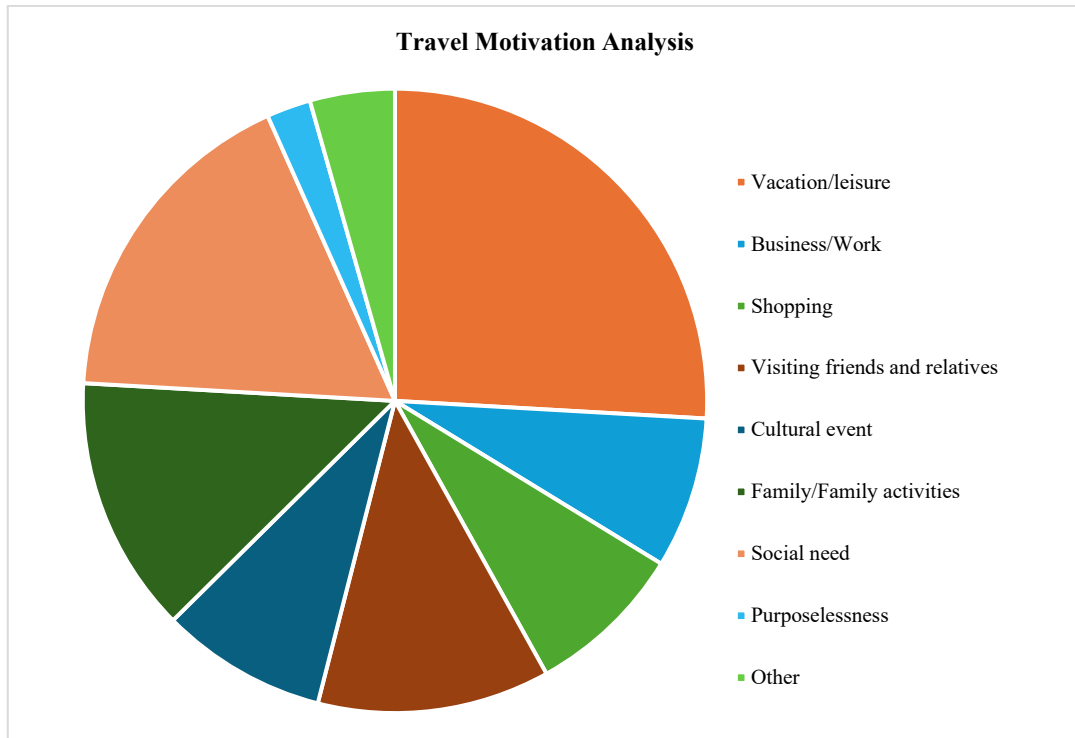


Figure 4.2: Visualisation of Travel Motivation Analysis

This research employed a visual analysis (Figure 4.2) to demonstrate the distribution discrepancies more intuitively.

4.2.3.2 Souvenir Buying Places Analysis

According to the frequency analysis of respondents' souvenir purchasing locations in Table 4.4, the research sample's consumer behaviour demonstrated the following features. **Tourist shops and local marketplaces are the most popular purchase venues.** Respondents are most likely to buy souvenirs from tourist shops (76.77%) and local markets (57.58%). The former may be preferred due to its product concentration, tourism-specific characteristics, and convenience. The latter is a significant option because it offers local speciality products and pricing advantages. Furthermore, shopping centres (55.65%), as comprehensive retail destinations, attracted more than half the respondents with their

transparent pricing and diverse product offerings, demonstrating the persistent importance of traditional offline channels.

Table 4.4: Results of Frequency Analysis of Item B2

B2. Where do you usually purchase souvenirs during your trip? (N=620)	Total No.	Percentage (%)
Tourist shops	476	76.77
Local markets	357	57.58
Museums or cultural centres	219	35.32
Airport shops	136	21.94
Malls	345	55.65
Online stores	216	34.84
Not purchase	44	7.10

Cultural and modern consumption patterns coexist. The purchasing behaviour at museums and cultural centres (35.32%) indicates that some respondents value the connection between souvenirs and the cultural significance of the destination, reflecting the trend of integrating culture with tourism consumption. The proportion of online stores (34.84%) as an emerging channel highlights the growing popularity of digital consumption, which may benefit from the variety and convenience of online platforms.

Unmet needs and supplementary situations also exist. Airport shops (21.94%) hold a smaller share due to high prices or product uniformity, but their presence indicates that some tourists have urgent purchasing demands. Notably, 7.1% of respondents do not purchase souvenirs, suggesting that some groups are uninterested in current products or have unmet needs (such as personalisation and practicality), providing guidance for market optimisation.

In summary, souvenir purchasing behaviour follows a “dominated by traditional venues and supplemented by multiple channels” pattern. It is based on a centralised supply of tourist-exclusive locations and combines cultural experiences with modern consumption behaviours.

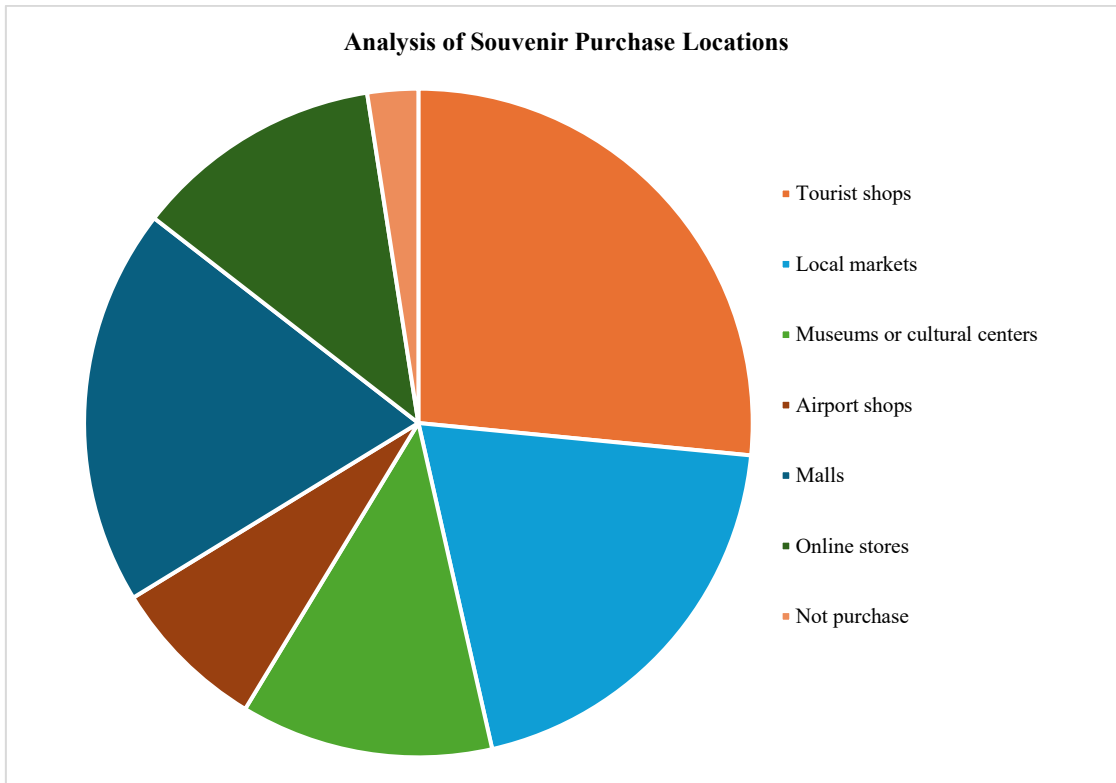


Figure 4.3: Visualisation of Souvenir Purchase Locations

This research employed a visual analysis (Figure 4.3) to illustrate the distribution discrepancies more intuitively.

4.2.3.3 Souvenir Purchase Categories Analysis

Based on the frequency analysis of respondents' souvenir purchase categories shown in Table 4.5, the consumption preferences of the research sample exhibit the following characteristics.

The main consumption categories emphasise local characteristics and practicality. Local speciality foods (63.87%) accounted for the largest share, highlighting respondents' strong demand for region-specific products and reflecting a preference for preserving travel memories through taste experiences. Accessories (62.74%) and artworks/paintings (56.77%) ranked second and third, indicating that tourists value

decorative appeal and cultural aesthetics when selecting souvenirs. The notable proportions for toys (53.39%) and stationery (45.65%) suggest the popularity of practical items, likely due to their everyday utility or suitability as gifts.

Table 4.5: Results of Frequency Analysis for Item B3

B3. Which of the following categories of souvenirs did you purchase on your most recent trip? You may choose more than one option. (N=620)	Total No.	Percentage (%)
Accessories	389	62.74
Jewellery	194	31.29
Collectable	217	35.00
Stationeries	283	45.65
Arts/Paintings	352	56.77
Antiques	64	10.32
Toys	331	53.39
Local speciality food	396	63.87
Crafts	260	41.94
Clothing	132	21.29
Books	56	9.03
Postcard/booklets	77	12.42
Not purchase	38	6.13

Secondary consumption categories relate to cultural craftsmanship and collectability. Arts and crafts (41.94%), representing local traditional handicrafts, reflect respondents' appreciation of cultural heritage. Jewellery (31.29%) and collectables (35%) indicate that a segment of tourist's values Unique, potential investment value, or emotional significance. However, the lower proportions indicate that this type of demand is exclusive to specific niche groups.

Lower-demand categories are niche or context-specific. Items such as antiques (10.32%), books (9.03%), and postcards/brochures (12.42%) received significantly less interest, possibly due to high prices, inconvenience in transport, or differences in cultural

appeal. Fewer respondents chose clothing (21.29%), indicating a desire among some tourists to express their destination's cultural identity through wearable items.

The market potential and non-purchasing groups are also noteworthy. A total of 6.13% of respondents did not purchase souvenirs, suggesting that some tourists may lack interest in available products or prefer experiential consumption (e.g., taking photos or checking in online). This finding points to potential opportunities for innovation in destination souvenir design.

In summary, souvenir consumption follows a pattern of "local characteristics at the core, with diverse and layered demands," balancing practicality and aesthetic value while accommodating interest in cultural symbols and specialised collectables.

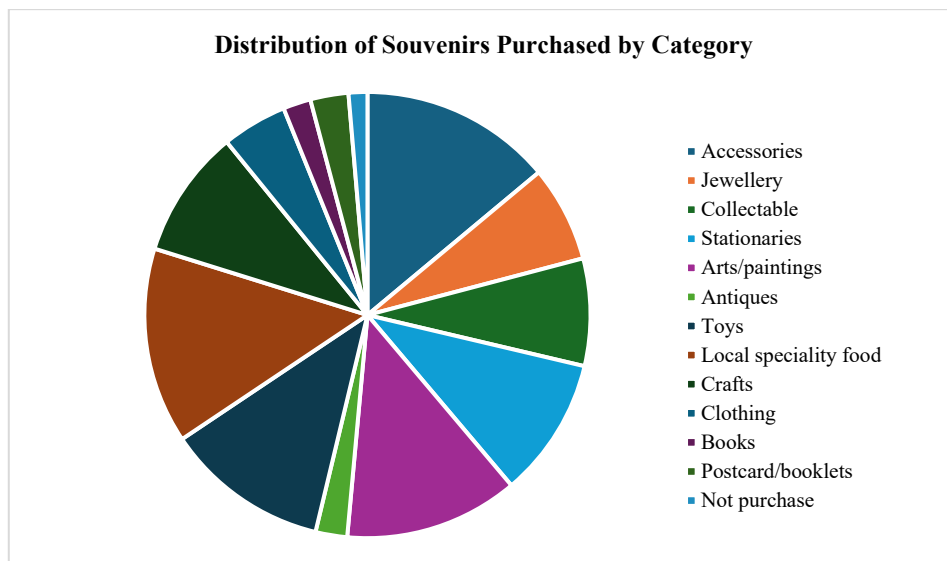


Figure 4.4: Visualisation of Types of Souvenirs Purchased

This research uses visual analysis (Figure 4.4) to illustrate these distribution differences.

4.2.3.4 Analysis of Cultural Souvenir Purchasing Motivations

According to the frequency analysis of respondents' motivations for purchasing cultural souvenirs (see Table 4.6), their consumption motivations exhibit multi-layered characteristics.

Table 4.6: Results of Frequency Analysis for Item B4

B4. What motivates you to purchase cultural souvenirs? You can tick more than one box. (N=620)	Total No.	Percentage (%)
Personal keepsake/To remember the trip	349	56.29
To learn more about the culture	281	45.32
As gifts for family or friends	241	38.87
As a collectible item	155	25
For decoration or home use	222	35.81
To support local communities	293	47.26
Other	50	8.06
Not purchase	45	7.26

The primary motivators are emotional memory and social responsibility. The leading incentive for respondents to purchase cultural souvenirs is personal commemoration (56.29%), highlighting the psychological tendency to preserve travel memories through tangible items. Secondly, the significant proportion of tourists indicating support for local communities (47.26%) reflects awareness of the social value of cultural consumption and a sense of responsibility to contribute to local economic development through purchasing behaviour. This aligns with the practical trends of sustainable tourism.

This research explores cultures and understand their social roles. The motivation for cultural understanding (45.32%) suggests that some tourists view souvenirs as a means of cultural discovery, deepening their appreciation of a destination's history or traditions through the symbolic value of the object. Simultaneously, the high proportion of respondents

citing gift-giving (38.87%) highlights the social function of souvenirs. Giving souvenirs allows tourists to share their travel experiences and strengthen interpersonal relationships, extending the symbolic role of cultural mementoes.

There are both practical and aesthetic requirements. The motivation for decoration or household use (35.81%) illustrates souvenirs' functional and aesthetic appeal, indicating that specific product designs have successfully integrated into everyday life. In contrast, demand for collectables (25%) represents a smaller proportion, suggesting that such behaviour is more prevalent among specific niche groups, such as collectors.

Market potential and unfulfilled needs exist. Although most respondents purchase cultural souvenirs, 7.26% do not, which may be due to product uniformity, price sensitivity, or a preference for non-material experiences (e.g., digital media). Additionally, 8.06% selected “other” motivations, indicating the presence of more personalised or unclassified needs.

In summary, the motivations for purchasing cultural souvenirs align with Belk's (1988) conceptualisation of souvenirs as identity markers. These objects serve the core function of preserving personal memories and meeting cognitive needs for cultural exploration and expressing social responsibility through consumption behaviour.

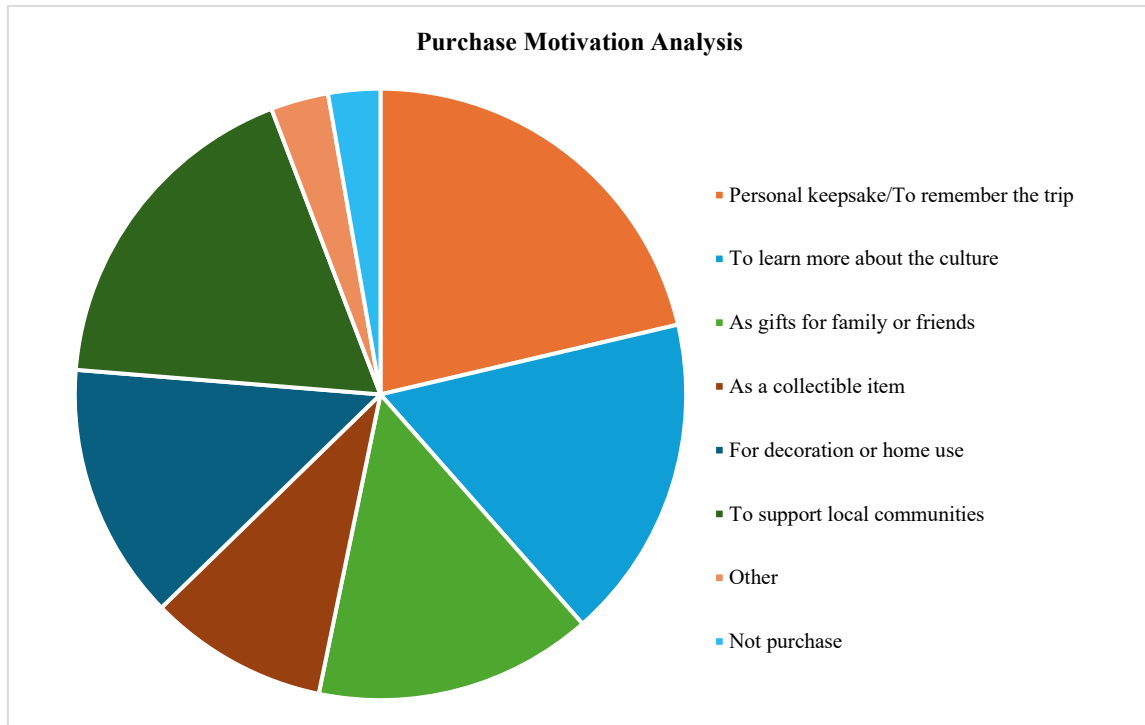


Figure 4.5: Visualisation of Purchase Motivations

This research employed visual analysis (Figure 4.5) to present the distributional differences in purchase motivations more intuitively.

4.2.3.5 Analysis of Material Preferences for Cultural Souvenirs

According to the frequency analysis of respondents' material preferences for cultural souvenirs presented in Table 4.7, their choices exhibit the following characteristics.

The primary material preferences are naturalness and durability. Respondents favour natural materials (66.77%), emphasising environmental preservation, sustainability, and natural qualities, which aligns with the global trend towards green consumption. Metal (55%) and wood (54.68%) follow closely. The high proportions for these materials can be attributed to their durability, artistic expression (such as carving craftsmanship), and cultural symbolism (for example, the historical significance of metal utensils), suggesting that both practical and aesthetic qualities are important.

Table 4.7: Results of Frequency Analysis for Item B5

B5. What material is your most preferred type of souvenir made from? (N=620)	Total No.	Percentage (%)
Wood	339	54.68
Natural materials	414	66.77
Fabric	265	42.74
Glass	140	22.58
Yarn or fibres	71	11.45
Clay	120	19.35
Leather	109	17.58
Paint	134	21.61
Metal	341	55.00
Not care a scrap	76	12.26

Craftsmanship and visual appeal are highly valued as secondary material preferences. The strong preference for fabrics (42.74%) highlights the cultural appeal of handicrafts or ethnic garments, likely due to their lightness, practicality, and cultural symbolism. The proportions for glass (22.58%) and coatings/paints (21.61%) indicate that some tourists prefer colourful or translucent items. Decorative souvenirs like stained glass and paint commonly use these materials to meet aesthetic demands.

Functional limitations and market positioning explain the lower demand for specific materials. The relatively low preference for clay (19.35%), leather (17.58%), and yarn/fibre (11.45%) may be due to material characteristics (such as fragility or cost) or niche product applications (for example, leather’s association with high-end goods). The market for these materials must enhance their appeal through distinctive design or cultural storytelling.

Neutral group: 12.26% of respondents stated that they “do not care about materials”, suggesting their purchasing decisions are based more on the function of souvenirs (such as price and symbolic meaning) than on physical attributes. This indicates that the market needs

to address the preferences of tourists who prioritise functionality over material aspects, for example, by incorporating emotional design or lightweight packaging.

In summary, respondents' material preferences for souvenirs reflect a consumption pattern dominated by naturalness and environmental protection, with practicality and aesthetics coexisting. This supports sustainability concepts and reveals a dual pursuit of cultural symbolism and everyday usefulness. This research employed a visual analysis (Figure 4.6) to illustrate the distribution differences more intuitively.

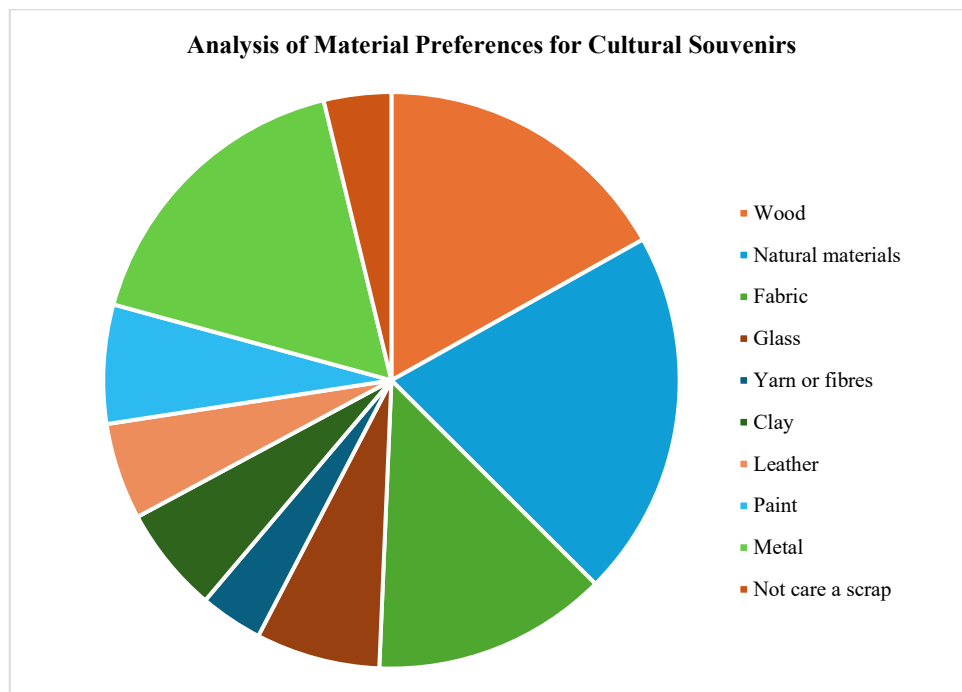


Figure 4.6: Visualisation of Cultural Souvenir Material Preferences

4.2.3.6 Travel Satisfaction Analysis

According to the statistical analysis in Table 4.8, respondents' overall satisfaction with their travel experience falls within the upper-middle range (mean = 3.648 on a 5-point scale), with a median score of 4. The result indicates that more than half of the responses are concentrated in the "satisfied" category or above (4-5 points).

Table 4.8: Travel Satisfaction Analysis

Indicator	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Med
B6. Do you enjoy your trip? 1= Very dissatisfied 5= Very satisfied	620	1	5	3.65	1.27	4
<i>Note: Sample size-N; Minimum Value-Min; Maximum Value-Max; Standard Deviation-SD; Median-Med</i>						

Although the overall evaluation is positive, the standard deviation is 1.266, indicating significant variation in respondent satisfaction: some groups (e.g., high-scoring segments) place good value on their travel experience, while a small number of low scores (minimum value = 1) indicate instances of negative experience, which could be caused by factors such as itinerary arrangements, service quality, or insufficient cultural engagement.

In summary, the data distribution shows that despite some individual differences, respondents' satisfaction with their travel is generally positive, suggesting that most people have a relatively enjoyable experience during their trips. However, destinations must continue to focus on the specific needs of low-satisfaction groups (e.g., optimising service details or improving personalised services) to enhance the consistency of tourism service quality and the tourist experience.

4.2.4 Descriptive Analysis of the Design Features Dimension

Table 4.9 presents a descriptive analysis of the design features of cultural souvenirs. The respondents' overall satisfaction with the design features is moderate (mean range: 3.24-3.30 on a 5-point scale). Part C is divided into C1, C2, and C3. C1 comprises five questions, coded C11-C15; C2 includes six questions, coded C21-C26; and C3 contains seven questions, coded C31-C37. C11-C37 represents the design features listed in the table.

The median score for all questions (C11-C37) is 3, indicating that most respondents' ratings fall within the "neutral" to "satisfied" range, reflecting tourists' generally neutral attitude towards design features. Although the standard deviations for each item vary slightly (1.162-1.286), the overall data distribution is fairly concentrated, indicating that while individual judgements differ, there is no significant disparity.

Table 4.9: Descriptive Analysis of the Design Features Dimension

Code	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Med
C11	620	1	5	3.265	1.261	3
C12	620	1	5	3.256	1.286	3
C13	620	1	5	3.298	1.231	3
C14	620	1	5	3.247	1.232	3
C15	620	1	5	3.287	1.25	4
C21	620	1	5	3.277	1.24	3
C22	620	1	5	3.242	1.259	3
C23	620	1	5	3.273	1.218	3
C24	620	1	5	3.276	1.174	3
C25	620	1	5	3.274	1.208	3
C26	620	1	5	3.294	1.205	3
C31	620	1	5	3.282	1.252	3
C32	620	1	5	3.284	1.207	3
C33	620	1	5	3.3	1.187	3
C34	620	1	5	3.271	1.222	3
C35	620	1	5	3.285	1.162	3
C36	620	1	5	3.284	1.227	3
C37	620	1	5	3.29	1.226	3

Note: Sample size-N; Minimum Value-Min; Maximum Value-Max; Standard Deviation-SD; Median-Med

It is worth noting that C33 ("with the maker's signature or the sign of the place visited") has a mean score of 3.3, which is somewhat higher than other items, implying that tourists value the "identity identification" aspect of cultural gifts. Such design features may enhance satisfaction by emphasising the product's Unique or cultural significance. Other

items with high scores (e.g., C15, with a median of 4 points) indicate that some respondents have greater expectations for specific functions (e.g., practicality and aesthetics). The data show that tourists' perceptions of design features are relatively balanced, with no strong preferences or rejections. The satisfaction ranking of design features has been calculated using the above data, as shown in Appendix N-Table 1.

4.2.5 Descriptive Analysis of the Purchase Intention Dimension

Table 4.10 presents a descriptive analysis of the purchase intention dimension, indicating that respondents' overall purchase intentions are moderate to neutral (mean range: 3.09-3.21, 5-point scale).

The median of all items (D11-D35) is 3 points, showing that most respondents' attitudes range from "neutral" to "slightly willing," reflecting the general cautious tendency to purchase cultural souvenirs. Although the standard deviation of each item varies slightly (1.002-1.09), the overall distribution is very concentrated, the variances between people are minor, and no significant disparities emerge.

It is worth noting that D12 ("Closer to local culture and history", mean = 3.21) and D25 ("Getting a medium that carries the unique charm of the place", mean = 3.18) have slightly higher scores than other items, implying that respondents are slightly more willing to purchase culturally relevant and local speciality products, which may be related to their demand for the depth of cultural experience and the symbolic value of souvenirs. In contrast, D35 (mean = 3.10) scored the lowest, showing that some respondents are less motivated to purchase specific functions (such as practicality or price sensitivity).

In summary, the findings reveal that respondents' purchase intentions are neutral and tentative.

Table 4.10: Descriptive Analysis of Purchase Intention Dimension

Code	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Med
D11	620	1	5	3.169	1.070	3
D12	620	1	5	3.211	1.072	3
D13	620	1	5	3.163	1.055	3
D14	620	1	5	3.163	1.050	3
D15	620	1	5	3.171	1.048	3
D21	620	1	5	3.155	1.079	3
D22	620	1	5	3.140	1.046	3
D23	620	1	5	3.182	1.056	3
D24	620	1	5	3.177	1.074	3
D25	620	1	5	3.184	1.022	3
D31	620	1	5	3.129	1.002	3
D32	620	1	5	3.155	1.038	3
D33	620	1	5	3.140	1.056	3
D34	620	1	5	3.161	1.090	3
D35	620	1	5	3.098	1.081	3

Note: Sample size-N; Minimum Value-Min; Maximum Value-Max; Standard Deviation-SD; Median-Med

4.2.6 Descriptive Analysis of Authenticity Dimension

According to Table 4.11, the analysis of how cultural souvenirs shows that people believe these souvenirs are authentic (average score: 3.665-3.785 on a 5-point scale). The median of all items (E11-E35) is 4 points, showing that most respondents' judgements fall into the "completely authentic" range, reflecting widespread recognition of the authenticity of cultural souvenirs.

Table 4.11: Dimensional Descriptive Analysis of Authenticity

Code	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Med
E11	620	1	5	3.771	1.231	4
E12	620	1	5	3.721	1.260	4
E13	620	1	5	3.710	1.246	4
E14	620	1	5	3.740	1.200	4
E15	620	1	5	3.785	1.221	4
E21	620	1	5	3.694	1.277	4
E22	620	1	5	3.710	1.228	4
E23	620	1	5	3.747	1.227	4
E24	620	1	5	3.735	1.222	4
E25	620	1	5	3.774	1.240	4
E31	620	1	5	3.752	1.224	4
E32	620	1	5	3.665	1.270	4
E33	620	1	5	3.768	1.237	4
E34	620	1	5	3.755	1.213	4
E35	620	1	5	3.713	1.249	4
<i>Note: Sample size-N; Minimum Value-Min; Maximum Value-Max; Standard Deviation-SD; Median-Med</i>						

Among them, E15 (“The authenticity of cultural souvenirs enhances my sense of identity with regional culture”) received the highest rating, with a mean of 3.785, emphasising the importance of authenticity in forming cultural identity.

The standard deviation of each item runs from 1.2 to 1.277, indicating that, while there are individual judgment variances (such as a few low scores), the general distribution is highly concentrated, and the majority of respondents have similar opinions. For example, while E32 (mean = 3.665) has the lowest score, it is still higher than the median threshold, indicating that respondents’ general attitude towards the authenticity dimension is consistent and positive.

In summary, the data demonstrate that cultural souvenirs effectively meet tourists’ perceived needs for local cultural values through authentic design (such as traditional craftsmanship and cultural symbol embedding). However, subtle differences (such as standard deviation fluctuations of different items) may be due to souvenir types and cultural backgrounds.

4.2.7 Attention Test Problem Analysis

Table 4.12 displays the results of the attention test analysis, specifically for the self-assessment question on the questionnaire: “Did you fill in this questionnaire carefully?” The test had 620 participants, and all (100%) answered the question, demonstrating a perfect response rate. Furthermore, the table displays a cumulative percentage of 100% for this question, showing that all replies have been fully counted.

In summary, the data integrity of the test items was high, with no omissions or errors, reflecting participants’ self-assessment of attention levels when filling out the questionnaire.

Table 4.12: Attention Test Analysis

Indicator	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
E4: Do you fill in this questionnaire carefully?	620	100	100
Total	620	100	100

4.3 Reliability and Validity Analysis

Please refer to Appendix P for the scope of the primary statistical methods and evaluation indicators involved in This research.

4.3.1 Reliability Analysis

Table 4.13 shows the Cronbach's α coefficient analysis results of design feature dimensions. The design feature dimension has a standardised Cronbach's α coefficient of 0.970, exceeding the threshold of 0.7, suggesting strong internal consistency.

The corrected item-total correlation (CITC) of all items ranges from 0.758 to 0.937, with C11 (CITC = 0.937) having the strongest correlation with the overall scale, possibly because its measurement content (such as focusing on improving the user's comfort) is more closely related to the dimension's core connotation.

Table 4.13: Cronbach's α Coefficient Analysis of Design Features

Code	CITC	A Coefficient with Term Deleted	Sub-dimension Cronbach's α	Overall Cronbach's α	AVE	CR
C11	0.937	0.967	0.907	0.97	0.645	0.97
C12	0.792	0.969				
C13	0.79	0.969				
C14	0.779	0.969				
C15	0.789	0.969				
C21	0.791	0.969	0.913			
C22	0.792	0.969				
C23	0.758	0.969				
C24	0.777	0.969				
C25	0.767	0.969				
C26	0.779	0.969	0.92			
C31	0.789	0.969				
C32	0.779	0.969				
C33	0.774	0.969				
C34	0.773	0.969				
C35	0.777	0.969				
C36	0.796	0.968				
C37	0.782	0.969				

Note: Standardized Cronbach α coefficient = 0.970; Corrected Item-Total Correlation = CITC; Average Variance Extracted = AVE; Composite Reliability = CR

After discarding any item, the α coefficient remains at 0.967–0.969. Only C36 ($\alpha = 0.968$ after deletion) is relatively lower, but still within the high reliability range, showing a solid scale structure and balanced contribution of each item to overall dependability. The findings reveal that the measuring method for the design feature dimension is highly reliable and suited for advanced analysis, such as structural equation modelling (SEM).

Table 4.14 shows a standardised Cronbach's α coefficient of 0.956 for the purchase intention dimension, showing strong internal consistency. The CITC values of each item range from 0.713 to 0.888. D11 (CITC = 0.888) has the highest correlation, possibly due to its direct reflection of the purchasing decision's key components (e.g., cultural identity).

Table 4.14: Cronbach's α Coefficient Analysis of the Purchase Intention Dimension

Code	CITC	A Coefficient with Term Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient	AVE	CR
D11	0.888	0.951	0.956	0.624	0.961
D12	0.774	0.953			
D13	0.744	0.954			
D14	0.748	0.954			
D15	0.744	0.954			
D21	0.740	0.954			
D22	0.737	0.954			
D23	0.760	0.953			
D24	0.755	0.953			
D25	0.713	0.954			
D31	0.729	0.954			
D32	0.732	0.954			
D33	0.736	0.954			
D34	0.758	0.953			
D35	0.734	0.954			

Note: Standardized Cronbach α coefficient = 0.956; Corrected Item-Total Correlation = CITC; Average Variance Extracted = AVE; Composite Reliability = CR

After deleting any item, the α coefficient remains above 0.950 with minimal volatility (e.g., $\alpha = 0.954$ after deleting D25), demonstrating that all items contribute consistently to the scale's dependability. Although some items' correlations (such as D25, CITC = 0.713) are marginally weaker, overall reliability is not significantly affected. This dimension's excellent reliability demonstrates the validity of its measuring technique and makes it acceptable for later multivariate analysis.

Table 4.15 shows that the standardised Cronbach α coefficient of the authenticity dimension is 0.958, and the CITC values of all items are between 0.749 and 0.774, indicating that each item (e.g., "the authenticity of souvenirs enhances cultural identity") has a good correlation with the overall scale.

After eliminating an item, the α coefficient remains at or above 0.955. For example, eliminating E11 results in $\alpha = 0.955$, suggesting a highly stable scale structure. The CITC value is slightly lower than the other two dimensions but still within a respectable range. The standardised α coefficient is close to 0.96, confirming the good reliability of the measurement of this dimension. The scale design of the authenticity dimension properly reflects tourists' multidimensional view of the authenticity of cultural souvenirs, giving a valid data foundation for the subsequent SEM model creation.

In summary, all $\alpha > 0.95$ exceed the 0.7 threshold (Nunnally, 1978), confirming high internal consistency. The finding suggests that the measurement instrument developed in the study was highly reliable, all dimensions met stringent reliability standards, and the data were suitable for sophisticated analysis, such as SEM.

Table 4.15: Cronbach’s α Coefficient Analysis of the Authenticity of Cultural Souvenirs

Code	CITC	A Coefficient with Term Deleted	Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient	AVE	CR
E11	0.774	0.955	0.958	0.595	0.956
E12	0.763	0.955			
E13	0.766	0.955			
E14	0.758	0.956			
E15	0.754	0.956			
E21	0.759	0.956			
E22	0.763	0.956			
E23	0.771	0.955			
E24	0.749	0.956			
E25	0.765	0.955			
E31	0.75	0.956			
E32	0.768	0.955			
E33	0.749	0.956			
E34	0.75	0.956			
E35	0.772	0.955			

Note: Standardised Cronbach α coefficient = 0.958; Corrected Item-Total Correlation = CITC; Average Variance Extracted = AVE; Composite Reliability = CR

4.3.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Table 4.16 shows the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) value and the results of Bartlett’s sphericity test. The KMO value is 0.982, indicating that the sample data are very suitable for factor analysis (see Appendix P for the standard details). The higher KMO value shows a strong correlation between the variables and favourable commonality, thus supporting the conduct of factor analysis.

Bartlett’s sphericity test was significant ($\chi^2 = 23865.099$, $df = 1128$, $p < 0.001$). Since the p-value is less than 0.05, it indicates that the null hypothesis (there is no significant correlation between the variables) is rejected. There are significant correlations between variables, which supports the rationality of factor analysis.

Table 4.16: KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO value	0.982
Bartlett's test of sphericity Approximate Chi-square (χ^2)	23,865.099
Bartlett's test degrees of freedom (<i>df</i>)	1,128
Bartlett's test <i>p</i> -value	0

Table 4.17 displays the factor loading coefficients following rotation. Three key components were extracted, each representing one of the three dimensions proposed by the theory. **For factor 3**, several items have high factor loading coefficients, especially E11 (0.772), E12 (0.753), and E13 (0.758), indicating that Factor 3 is mainly related to the authenticity dimension of cultural souvenirs. Other items, such as E14 (0.738) to E35 (0.754), also show relatively consistent factor loading coefficients, indicating that this factor contains multiple dimensions of the authenticity of cultural souvenirs. In summary, the items are strictly aggregated according to the preset three dimensions (factors): C11-C14 belong to the design feature factor, D11-D35 belong to the purchase intention factor, and E11–E35 belong to the authenticity factor. The factor loading coefficients are all > 0.7, indicating that the items can effectively reflect the corresponding dimensions (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 4.17: Factor Loading Coefficients After Rotation

Code	Factors And Indicators	Factor Loadings		
		1	3	2
Design Features				
C11	Care and travel	0.9		
C12		0.783		
C13		0.769		
C14		0.784		
C15		0.775		
C21	Aesthetic	0.778		
C22		0.787		
C23		0.75		
C24		0.771		
C25		0.751		
C26		0.786		

Table 4.17 continued

C31	Unique	0.774		
C32		0.768		
C33		0.768		
C34		0.786		
C35		0.761		
C36		0.793		
C37		0.764		
Purchase Intention				
D11	Purchase Motive			0.868
D12				0.785
D13				0.743
D14				0.751
D15				0.764
D21	Purchase Attitude			0.735
D22				0.734
D23				0.771
D24				0.764
D25				0.715
D31	Purchase Behaviour			0.725
D32				0.741
D33				0.733
D34				0.754
D35				0.747
Authenticity of Cultural Souvenirs				
E11	Authenticity Cognition of Cultural Souvenirs		0.772	
E12			0.753	
E13			0.758	
E14			0.738	
E15			0.74	
E21	Purchase Behaviour and Authenticity		0.751	
E22			0.74	
E23			0.757	
E24			0.747	
E25			0.754	
E31	Attitudes Towards Imitations		0.758	
E32			0.761	
E33			0.758	
E34			0.769	
E35			0.754	

This evidence demonstrates that the questionnaire items designed in This research can accurately capture the target concept and avoid the data bias of “answering the wrong question”. High-loaded items (such as C11, D11, and E11) can serve as primary optimisation directions for destination cultural souvenir development (such as improving product comfort, strengthening design Unique, and enhancing the cultural narrative).

4.4 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and independent samples t-tests were employed to examine the influence of categorical demographic variables (e.g., age groups, gender) on continuous outcome variables (design features, purchase intention, authenticity). These methods are ideally suited for comparing means across multiple groups and testing for statistically significant differences, directly addressing Research Objective 2 regarding demographic influences.

Table 4.18 presents comparative data between different genders regarding design features, purchase intentions, and authenticity of cultural souvenirs.

Table 4.18: Independent Samples *t*-Test for Gender

	Gender		<i>t</i>	P
	Female	Male		
Design Features	0.785	0.926	3.660	0.059*
Purchase Intention	0.671	0.892	6.698	0.011**
Authenticity of Cultural Souvenir	0.769	0.945	2.344	0.129
<i>Note: *p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001</i>				

In terms of design features, the mean difference between females (M = 0.785) and males (M = 0.926) was close to the critical value of significance ($t = 3.66$, $p = 0.059$), indicating that there was no distinction between gender preferences for design features.

There are significant gender differences in purchase intention ($t = 6.698, p = 0.011$), with male purchase intention ($M = 0.892$) significantly higher than female purchase intention ($M = 0.671$), indicating that gender may be a key factor influencing purchase decisions.

In the perceived authenticity of cultural souvenirs ($t = 2.344, p = 0.129$), the means for men and women (female = 0.769, male = 0.945) did not reflect statistically significant differences. In summary, gender may be a key factor influencing purchasing decisions. Furthermore, gender only significantly affects purchase intention, with males showing a stronger tendency to purchase. In contrast, there are no significant gender differences in design features and cultural authenticity.

Table 4.19 shows the results of one-way ANOVA for different age groups regarding design features, purchase intention, and authenticity of cultural souvenirs. The F -value in the table represents the F -statistic in analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the p -value denotes the significance level.

There are significant age differences in design features ($p = 0.021$), with the 35-49 age group having the highest mean (0.986), indicating that the middle-aged group pays the most attention to or is most satisfied with product design features; the 56 and above age group has the lowest mean (0.632), which may reflect that this group pays less attention to design features. The young groups (18-25, 26-34) and the underage group (under 18) have intermediate values, with slight differences.

There is a significant age difference in purchase intention ($p = 0.013$). The purchase intention of the 18-25 age group (0.904) and the underage group (0.903) is the highest, indicating that young consumers are more easily attracted to the product. The 50-55 age group (0.601) and the 26-34 age group (0.642) have the lowest values, which may reflect

that these young and middle-aged groups are more cautious in their purchasing decisions. The 56 and above age group (0.721) and the 35-49 age group (0.816) are in the middle, with the middle-aged group still showing a strong willingness to buy.

Table 4.19: Age One-way ANOVA

	Age Group						F	P
	18 – 25	50 - 55	35 - 49	26 - 34	>56	<18		
Design Features	0.685	0.728	0.986	0.954	0.632	0.885	2.815	0.021**
Purchase Intention	0.904	0.601	0.816	0.642	0.721	0.903	3.087	0.013**
Authenticity of Cultural Souvenir	0.832	0.629	1.028	0.998	0.699	0.873	3.379	0.008***
<i>Note: *p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001</i>								

The age difference in the perception of authenticity of cultural souvenirs was the most significant ($p = 0.008$), with the 35-49 age group having the highest mean value (1.028), indicating that the middle-aged group has the highest requirements for or recognition of the authenticity of cultural souvenirs. Significant differences were between the 50-55 age group (0.629) and the 26-34 age group (0.998), which may reflect differing sensitivities to cultural connotations across age groups. The values of the minor group (0.873) and the young group (0.832 for the 18-25 age groups) were slightly higher than those of the middle-aged group.

These significant age differences reveal a clear generational segmentation in the Chinese cultural souvenir market. The high sensitivity of the 35-49 age group to design and authenticity suggests they are a prime target for high-quality, craft-based souvenirs. Conversely, the strong purchase intention among the 18-25 cohort, despite lower focus on authenticity, indicates a market for visually appealing, innovative, and perhaps more accessible or digital souvenir options.

Table 4.20 shows the results of one-way ANOVA regarding design features, purchase intention, and authenticity of cultural souvenirs across different monthly income ranges.

Table 4.20: Monthly Income One-way ANOVA

	Monthly Income Range (RMB)						F	P
	4,001-6,000	6,001-8,000	8,001-12,000	3,501-4,000	> 12,000	< 3,500		
Design Features	0.924	0.903	0.628	0.955	0.601	0.747	1.088	0.372
Purchase Intention	0.85	0.687	0.531	0.815	1.025	0.601	1.673	0.149
Authenticity of Cultural Souvenir	0.902	0.728	0.462	0.828	1.084	1.052	1.918	0.099*

*Note: *p < 0.05*

Design features ($F = 1.088$, $p = 0.372$) indicate that different income groups tend to have similar preferences or evaluation criteria for product design. Purchase intention also did not reach a statistically significant level ($F = 1.673$, $p = 0.149$), suggesting that the direct impact of income levels on consumption decisions is limited.

The perceived authenticity of cultural souvenirs is close to the critical significance value of 0.1 ($F = 1.918$, $p = 0.099$). Although it does not reach the strict significance threshold, it suggests there may be a particular trend in the impact of monthly income on the perceived authenticity of cultural souvenirs.

This statistic indicates a potential difference trend between high-income groups (such as “more than 12,000 RMB”, with a mean of 1.084) and low-income groups (such as “less than 3,500 RMB”, with a mean of 1.052), which may be related to consumption capacity or

cultural participation. In summary, monthly income has only a marginal effect on perceived authenticity, while design features and purchase intention are less affected by income.

Table 4.21 shows the results of one-way ANOVA for different education level groups regarding design features, purchase intention, and authenticity of cultural souvenirs.

Table 4.21: Education Level One-way ANOVA

	Highest Level of Education					F	P
	Doctoral Degree	Associate Degree	Bachelor Degree	High School	Master Degree		
Design Features	0.32	0.924	0.929	0.795	0.754	3.052	0.021**
Purchase Intention	0.561	0.912	0.798	0.515	0.651	3.263	0.015**
Authenticity of Cultural Souvenir	0.701	0.879	0.964	0.885	0.654	2.01	0.099*

*Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$*

There were significant differences in design features according to educational level ($F = 3.052$, $p = 0.021$ **), with the means of the college group ($M = 0.924$) and the undergraduate group ($M = 0.929$) being significantly higher than those of other educational groups (e.g., PhD $M = 0.32$). This result demonstrates that the preference for design features among the middle and higher education groups was more pronounced, which might be related to aesthetic experience or professional background.

Purchase intention was significant ($F = 3.263$, $p = 0.015$ **). However, this finding needs to be combined with specific group analysis: The mean purchase intention of the college group was significantly higher than that of the other groups ($M = 0.912$ vs. PhD $M = 0.561$, high school $M = 0.515$), which may be due to the large sample size ($n = 203$). The difference between the PhD group ($M = 0.561$) and the high school ($M = 0.515$) and master's

(M = 0.651) groups did not reach a significant level. This could be because people with higher education tend to spend more rationally.

The perceived authenticity of cultural souvenirs was close to being significant (F = 2.01, p = 0.099 *), with the undergraduate group having the highest average score (M = 0.964), indicating that higher education might affect how people judge authenticity based on their cultural understanding. However, marginal results should be interpreted with caution.

In summary, education level substantially impacts design features and purchasing intentions, with individuals with middle and higher education being the primary consumption drivers. Education level may also have a certain trend-based impact on the perceived authenticity of cultural souvenirs.

Table 4.22: H2 Hypothesis Verification Table based on Variance Analysis

Research Hypothesis		P-Value	Decision
H2: Tourist' personal factors (demographics) significantly influence their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs	H2a: Tourists' age significantly influences their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs	0.021**	Supported
	H2b: Tourists' gender significantly influences their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs.	0.059*	Not Supported
	H2c: Tourists' income level significantly influences their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs.	0.372	Not Supported
	H2d: Tourist' educational level significantly influences their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs.	0.021**	Supported

According to the findings of the variance analysis, age (p = 0.021) and education level (p = 0.021) significantly influenced tourists' preferences for cultural souvenir design

features. However, the independent effects of gender ($p = 0.059$) and income level ($p = 0.372$) did not meet the statistical significance threshold ($\alpha = 0.05$). This allows the researcher to test Hypothesis 2 (H2a–H2d), and Table 4.22 displays the results.

However, the t-test only examines the mean gender difference on the design feature score. It does not control for the influence of other variables (such as age and income), which may mask the actual effect. On the other hand, ANOVA analysis also has limitations because it tests only the independent effect of a single independent variable (such as gender) on the dependent variable (design feature preference), ignoring the interference of other variables.

Therefore, this research further verifies hypothesis H2 in the SEM model analysis (see Section 4.6.2 for details).

4.5 Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to assess the strength and direction of the linear relationships between the key continuous constructs: design features, purchase intention, and perceived authenticity. This technique was selected as a preliminary step to understand the bivariate associations before proceeding to more complex multivariate modeling like SEM, which aligns with the exploratory nature of investigating the interconnections between these core variables. It is suitable for measuring how strongly these variables are connected. All three variables in This research are continuous data (the 5-point scale can be treated as essentially continuous). Table 4.23 presents the findings of the analysis.

Table 4.23: Correlation Analysis Table

	Design Features	Purchase Intention	Authenticity Of Cultural Souvenirs
Design Features	1		
Purchase Intention	0.410**	1	
Authenticity of Cultural Souvenirs	0.469**	0.450**	1
<i>Note: ** $p < 0.01$</i>			

Design features and purchase intention are significantly positively correlated, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.410$. The correlation is statistically significant (** indicates $p < 0.01$), indicating that design features positively impact purchase intention.

Purchase intention and perceived authenticity of cultural souvenirs are also significantly positively correlated, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.450$. This means that consumers' purchase intentions are moderately positively associated with their perception of the authenticity of cultural souvenirs.

Design features and perceived authenticity of cultural souvenirs are also significantly positively correlated, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.469$. This indicates a significant positive relationship, suggesting that design features affect consumers' perception of the authenticity of cultural souvenirs to some extent.

In summary, the positive associations among the three variables indicate that multiple factors influence customers' attitudes towards cultural souvenirs. Design features can enhance purchase intentions and indirectly influence consumer decisions by improving perceptions of authenticity, leading to a hypothetical causal path of "Design → Authenticity → Purchase Intention."

4.6 Hypothesis Verification

4.6.1 Verification of Hypothesis 1

4.6.1.1 Model Fit Assessment

Table 4.24 presents the goodness-of-fit indices for the structural equation model (SEM) alongside the corresponding evaluation criteria. According to the recommended thresholds for model fit, the results indicate that the model demonstrates a satisfactory overall fit.

$\chi^2/df = 1.142$ (standard range: 1-3), indicating that the model complexity and sample size are well balanced.

RMSEA = 0.015 (<0.08), suggesting that the model error is extremely low and the model fit is highly accurate.

NFI = 0.951, IFI = 0.994, CFI = 0.994 (all > 0.9), indicating a high degree of model fit.

GFI = 0.927 and AGFI = 0.919, while slightly below 0.9, remain within the acceptable range and do not compromise the overall conclusion.

Table 4.24: H1 SEM Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	χ^2/df	RMSEA	NFI	IFI	CFI	GFI	AGFI
Evaluation Criteria	$1 < \chi^2/df < 3$	<0.08	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9
Model Standards	1.142	0.015	0.951	0.994	0.994	0.927	0.919

In summary, the model demonstrates a good overall fit according to academic standards, and the data support verifying the theoretical hypotheses.

4.6.1.2 Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Verification

Table 4.25 presents the estimated path coefficients in the SEM. The relevant abbreviations are as follows: Unstandardised path coefficient (B); standardised path coefficient (β); standard error (S.E.); critical ratio (C.R.); p-value (p).

H1a: Care and Travel (CT) \rightarrow Purchase intention, $\beta = 0.619$ ($p < 0.001$), indicates that tourists' demand for souvenir practicality and emotional resonance significantly drives purchase decisions. An example is whether the product is easy to carry or can evoke travel memories.

H1b: Aesthetics (A) \rightarrow Purchase intention, $\beta = 0.635$ ($p < 0.001$), representing the strongest influence among all paths. This research highlights the central role of visual appeal (e.g., colour and shape) in consumer decision-making.

H1c: Unique (U) \rightarrow Purchase intention, $\beta = 0.499$ ($p < 0.001$), showing that product scarcity or cultural distinctiveness (e.g., limited editions or local symbolism) has a moderate impact on purchase intention. In summary, H1a-H1c are all supported. The path coefficients confirm that all three design dimensions are potent drivers, but their relative strengths offer practical guidance. The dominance of Aesthetics ($\beta = 0.635$) underscores that for Chinese tourists, the initial visual appeal of a souvenir is paramount. Care and Travel ($\beta = 0.619$) is nearly as important, highlighting a non-negotiable demand for practicality and durability. Unique ($\beta = 0.499$), while significant, suggests that being distinctive is a strong value-add rather than the primary purchase trigger.

Table 4.25: Path Coefficients for H1 SEM

Hypothesis Path		B	β	S.E.	C.R.	P	Decision
H1a	PI <--- CT	0.661	0.619	0.068	10.432	***	Supported
H1b	PI <--- A	0.620	0.635	0.061	10.017	***	Supported
H1c	PI <--- U	0.521	0.499	0.054	9.158	***	Supported
<i>Note: *** $p < 0.001$</i> <i>Purchase intention=PI; Care and Travel=CT; Aesthetic=A; Unique=U</i>							

Table 4.26 shows that each latent variable's measurement items (observed variables) are highly correlated with their respective theoretical constructs.

The β values for the measurement items under Care and Travel (CT) range from 0.789 to 0.951 (C.R. > 22), indicating that the questionnaire items effectively capture the underlying meaning of this dimension. The β values for Aesthetics (A) range from 0.769 to 0.807 (C.R. > 21), confirming the internal consistency of multiple indicators related to design aesthetics. The β values for Unique (U) range from 0.786 to 0.808 (C.R. > 22), showing that all observed variables reliably and consistently measure the construct of Unique.

The SEM relies on the C.R. and β values to assess the reliability and validity of the measurement model. The combination of these two indicators confirms the robustness of the questionnaire design from the perspectives of both statistical significance and effect size. In This research, statistical significance (C.R. > 1.96) indicates a non-random relationship between the observed variables and the latent constructs (Byrne, 2016). Effect size ($\beta \geq 0.7$) demonstrates that the measurement items possess adequate explanatory power (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 4.26: Path Coefficients of the SEM - Observed Variables

Path	B	β	S.E.	C.R.	P
PI <--- CT	0.661	0.619	0.068	10.432	***
PI <--- A	0.620	0.635	0.061	10.017	***
PI <--- U	0.521	0.499	0.054	9.158	***
CT 5 <--- CT	1	0.800			
CT 4 <--- CT	0.972	0.789	0.043	22.703	***
CT 3 <--- CT	0.988	0.802	0.043	23.234	***
CT 2 <--- CT	1.032	0.802	0.044	23.211	***
CT 1 <--- CT	1.201	0.951	0.04	29.995	***
A6 <--- A	1	0.792			
A5 <--- A	0.989	0.782	0.045	22.133	***
A4 <--- A	0.972	0.79	0.043	22.435	***
A3 <--- A	0.982	0.769	0.045	21.662	***
A2 <--- A	1.061	0.804	0.046	22.982	***
A1 <--- A	1.048	0.807	0.045	23.087	***
U7 <--- U	1	0.792			
U6 <--- U	1.020	0.808	0.044	23.107	***
U5 <--- U	0.950	0.793	0.042	22.557	***
U4 <--- U	0.990	0.786	0.044	22.293	***
U3 <--- U	0.962	0.787	0.043	22.315	***
U2 <--- U	0.983	0.791	0.044	22.456	***
U1 <--- U	1.034	0.802	0.045	22.904	***
PM 1 <--- PI	1	0.911			
PM 2 <--- PI	0.871	0.792	0.032	27.114	***
PM 3 <--- PI	0.825	0.762	0.033	25.233	***
PM 4 <--- PI	0.824	0.766	0.032	25.421	***
PM 5 <--- PI	0.820	0.763	0.032	25.237	***
PA 1 <--- PI	0.837	0.756	0.034	24.84	***
PA 2 <--- PI	0.808	0.754	0.033	24.711	***
PA 3 <--- PI	0.841	0.776	0.032	26.099	***
PA 4 <--- PI	0.853	0.774	0.033	25.936	***
PA 5 <--- PI	0.768	0.733	0.033	23.495	***
PB 1 <--- PI	0.766	0.746	0.032	24.23	***
PB 2 <--- PI	0.798	0.749	0.033	24.453	***
PB 3 <--- PI	0.820	0.757	0.033	24.895	***
PB 4 <--- PI	0.870	0.778	0.033	26.178	***
PB 5 <--- PI	0.830	0.749	0.034	24.43	***

Note: Purchase Intention=PI; Care and Travel=CT; Purchase Motivation=PM; Purchase Attitude=PA; Purchase Behaviour=PB; Aesthetic=A; Unique=U

In summary, these two indicators jointly verify the convergent validity and reliability of the measurement model and the scientific rigour and reliability of the questionnaire design employed in This research.

The H1 SEM model is presented in Figure 4.7. Aesthetics had the strongest effect on purchase intention. The SEM model data determined the ranking of each design feature dimension's influence on purchase intention (see Appendix N – Table 2 for details).

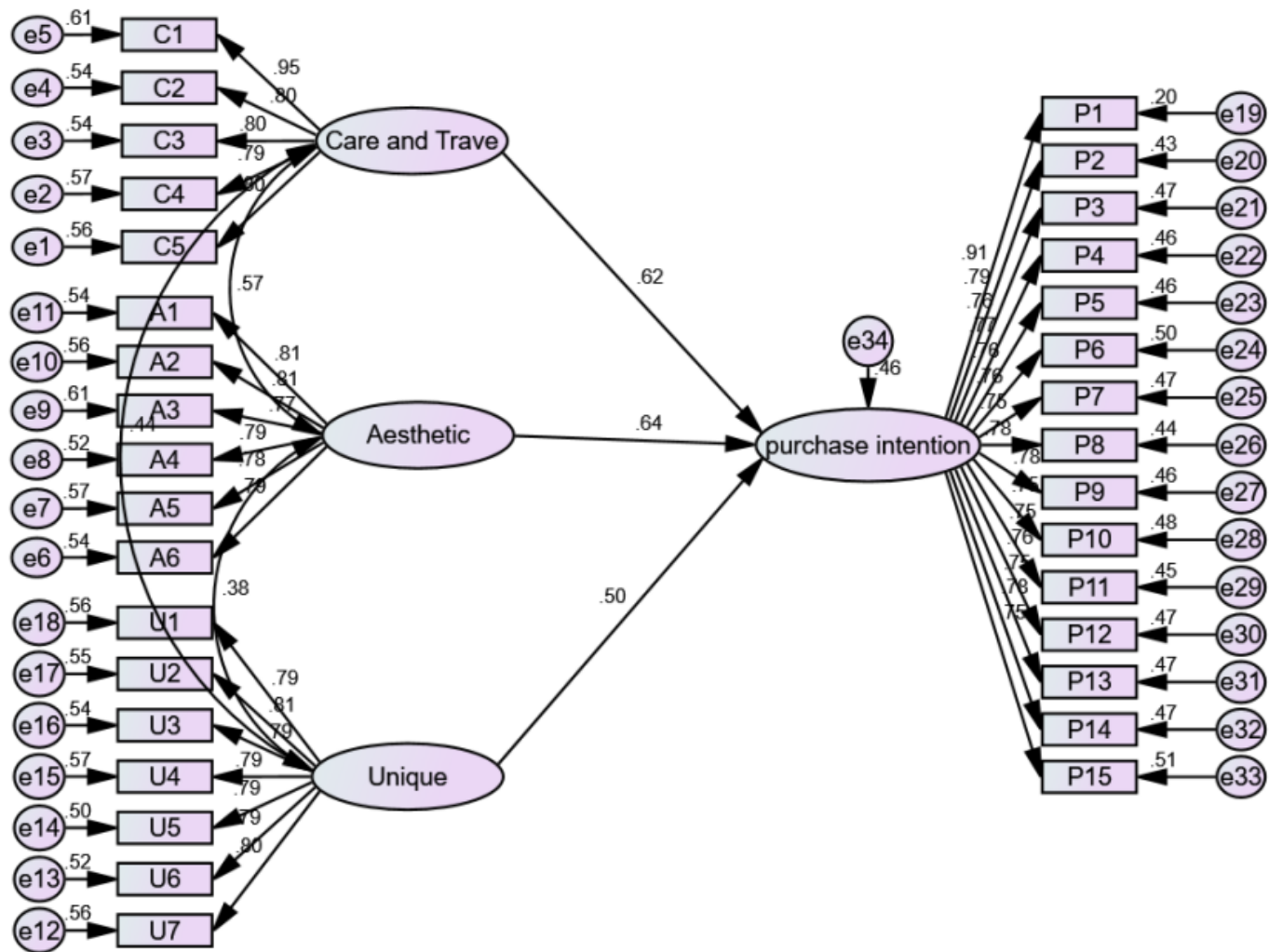


Figure 4.7: H1 SEM model

4.6.1.3 H1 Results Verification

Table 4.27 summarises the verification results of the H1 hypothesis in the SEM. The research hypothesis H1 posits that the design features of cultural souvenirs have a positive impact on tourists' purchase intentions.

Table 4.27: H1 Hypothesis Verification

Research Hypothesis		Path Correlation	P-value	Decision
H1: The design features of cultural souvenirs positively impact tourists' purchase intentions.	H1a: The "Care and Travel" dimension (encompassing functionality, durability, portability, and convenience during travel) positively impacts tourists' purchase intentions.	0.619	***	Supported
	H1b: The "Aesthetic" dimension (pertaining to visual appeal, colour, shape, and the embodiment of cultural artistry) positively impacts tourists' purchase intention.	0.635	***	Supported
	H1c: The "Unique" dimension (reflecting originality, symbolic meaning, local specificity, and innovative design) positively impacts tourists' purchase intention.	0.499	***	Supported
<i>Note: *** $p < 0.001$</i>				

In Hypothesis H1a, the path coefficient for the influence of care and travel on tourists' purchase intention is 0.619, with a statistically significant p-value of less than 0.001. This indicates a significant positive effect, supporting Hypothesis H1a.

In Hypothesis H1b, the path coefficient for the influence of aesthetics on purchase intention is 0.635, with a p-value below 0.001, indicating a similarly significant positive relationship. Thus, Hypothesis H1b is supported.

In Hypothesis H1c, the path coefficient for the influence of Unique on purchase intention is 0.499, with a p-value below 0.001, demonstrating that this effect is also statistically significant. Consequently, Hypothesis H1c is supported.

In summary, all sub-hypotheses (H1a, H1b, and H1c) are supported, confirming the positive impact of the design features of cultural souvenirs on tourists' purchase intentions. The prominence of aesthetics ($\beta = 0.635$) is consistent with Littrell et al.'s (1994) findings, which emphasise the role of visual appeal as a primary driver in consumer purchasing behaviour.

4.6.2 Verification of Hypothesis 2

4.6.2.1 Model Fit Assessment

According to the fit indices shown in Table 4.28, the overall fit of the H2 structural equation model (SEM) is excellent.

Table 4.28: H2 SEM Fit Indices

Fit index	χ^2/df	RMSEA	NFI	IFI	CFI	GFI	AGFI
Evaluation Criteria	$1 < \chi^2/df < 3$	<0.08	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9
Model Standards	1.114	0.014	0.979	0.998	0.998	0.968	0.96

$\chi^2/df = 1.114$ (standard range: 1–3), indicating that the model complexity and sample size are well balanced.

RMSEA = 0.014 (<0.08), showing that the model error is tiny and the fitting accuracy is high.

NFI = 0.979, IFI = 0.998, CFI = 0.998 (all > 0.9), verifying the structural validity of the model.

GFI = 0.968, AGFI = 0.960 (close to or exceeding 0.9), further supporting the model's reliability.

In summary, the structural equation model demonstrated excellent fit across all indices, met academic standards, and enabled the testing of hypotheses.

4.6.2.2 Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Verification

Table 4.29 presents the coefficient estimation results for each path in the structural equation model, focusing on the influence of different demographic variables on design features.

The table shows that the critical ratio (C.R.) values for all demographic variables for design features are well above the threshold (C.R. > 3.29), indicating that these variables exert a substantial and statistically significant impact on design preferences ($p < 0.001$). Tourists' age, gender, income, and education level all significantly influence their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs, as detailed below:

H2a: The effect of age. $\beta = 0.167$ ($p < 0.001$) indicates that as individuals age, they tend to have a stronger preference for design features. For instance, older tourists may emphasise traditional elements or the practicality of a design (e.g., portability).

H2b: The effect of gender. $\beta = 0.249$ ($p < 0.001$), showing that gender differences substantially impact design preferences. For example, male tourists may favour functional designs (e.g., durability), whereas female tourists may be more inclined towards aesthetic or emotional aspects.

H2c: The effect of income. $\beta = 0.202$ ($p < 0.001$), indicating a positive correlation between income level and design preferences. For example, individuals with higher incomes may prefer premium materials or limited-edition items, while those with lower incomes may focus more on cost-effectiveness.

Table 4.29: Path Coefficient Table of the SEM - Design Features

Path	B	β	S.E.	C.R.	P
DF <--- Age	0.161	0.167	0.041	3.903	***
DF <--- Gender	0.608	0.249	0.099	6.175	***
DF <--- Income	0.181	0.202	0.039	4.694	***
DF <--- Education	0.170	0.150	0.047	3.572	***
CT1 <--- DF	1	0.952			
CT2 <--- DF	0.860	0.803	0.028	30.296	***
CT3 <--- DF	0.823	0.803	0.027	30.323	***
CT4 <--- DF	0.81	0.790	0.028	29.19	***
CT5 <--- DF	0.834	0.801	0.028	30.156	***
A1 <--- DF	0.832	0.806	0.027	30.569	***
A2 <--- DF	0.842	0.803	0.028	30.353	***
A3 <--- DF	0.780	0.769	0.028	27.525	***
A4 <--- DF	0.772	0.790	0.026	29.166	***
A5 <--- DF	0.787	0.782	0.028	28.552	***
A6 <--- DF	0.795	0.793	0.027	29.417	***
U1 <--- DF	0.836	0.802	0.028	30.260	***
U2 <--- DF	0.795	0.791	0.027	29.253	***
U3 <--- DF	0.777	0.786	0.027	28.896	***
U4 <--- DF	0.799	0.785	0.028	28.778	***
U5 <--- DF	0.766	0.792	0.026	29.363	***
U6 <--- DF	0.824	0.806	0.027	30.627	***
U7 <--- DF	0.809	0.793	0.027	29.422	***

Note: *** $P < 0.001$
Design Features =DF; Care and Travel=CT; Aesthetic=A; Unique=U

H2d: The effect of the education level. $\beta = 0.150$ ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that the influence of the education level is weaker but still statistically significant. For instance, those with higher levels of education may value cultural symbolism or intricate craftsmanship,

whereas individuals with lower education levels may prefer more intuitive or straightforward designs.

In summary, Hypothesis H2 and its sub-hypotheses (H2a–H2d) are all supported. Tourists' age, gender, income, and education level significantly influence their preferences for cultural souvenir design features. The order of influence, based on the standardised coefficients, is as follows:

Gender ($\beta = 0.249$) > Income ($\beta = 0.202$) > Age ($\beta = 0.167$) > Education ($\beta = 0.150$).

4.6.2.3 H2 Results Verification

Table 4.30 presents the results of the hypothesis testing regarding the influence of tourists' personal factors on their preferences or evaluations of cultural souvenir design features. Research hypothesis H2 proposes that tourists' personal factors significantly affect their preferences or evaluations of cultural souvenir design features.

In the H2a hypothesis, tourists' age has a significant impact on their preference for the design features of cultural souvenirs, with a path coefficient of 0.167 and a p-value less than 0.001, indicating that the hypothesis is supported.

In the H2b hypothesis, tourists' gender also significantly affects their preference for the design features of cultural souvenirs, with a path coefficient of 0.249 and a p-value less than 0.001, showing that gender plays a vital role in preferences, so the H2b hypothesis is also supported.

Table 4.30: H2 Hypothesis Verification Table Based on SEM

Research Hypothesis		Path Correlation	P-value	Decision
H2: Tourist' personal factors (demographic s) significantly influence their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs.	H2a: Tourists' age significantly influences their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs	0.167	***	Supported
	H2b: Tourists' gender significantly influences their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs.	0.249	***	Supported
	H2c: Tourists' income level significantly influences their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs.	0.202	***	Supported
	H2d: Tourists' educational level significantly influences their preferences for the design features of cultural souvenirs.	0.150	***	Supported
<i>Note: *** P<0.001</i>				

In the H2c hypothesis, tourists' income level affects their preference for design features with a score of 0.202 and a p-value less than 0.001, showing that income has a significant impact on preferences, which supports the H2c hypothesis.

In the H2d hypothesis, tourists' education level significantly affects their preference for the design features of cultural souvenirs, with a path coefficient of 0.150 and a p-value less than 0.001, showing that this hypothesis is also supported.

In summary, all sub-hypotheses (H2a, H2b, H2c, and H2d) are supported, demonstrating that tourists' age, gender, income level, and education level significantly influence their preferences or evaluations of cultural souvenir design features. The H2 structural equation model diagram is shown in Figure 4.8.

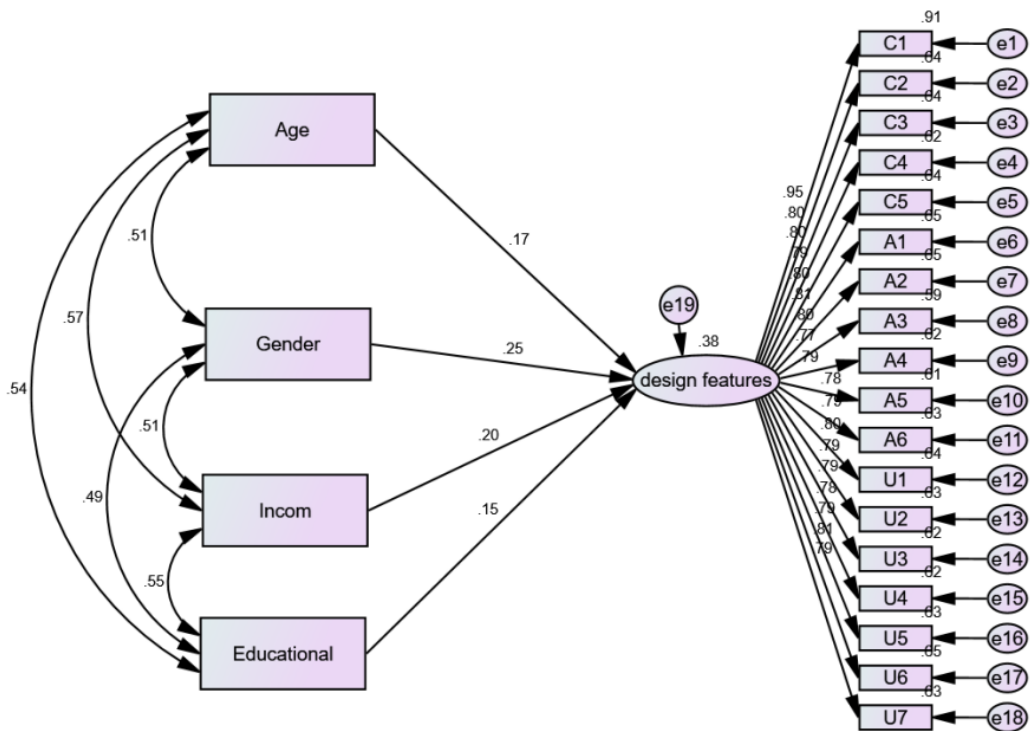


Figure 4.8: H2 SEM Model

4.6.2.4 Discussion on the Discrepancy between H2 Results from ANOVA and SEM

This research employed both analyses of variance (ANOVA) and structural equation modelling (SEM) to validate hypothesis H2, that tourists' personal attributes influence their preferences for cultural souvenir design features from multiple perspectives.

Preliminary ANOVA results indicated that age and education level significantly affect design feature preferences. However, the independent effects of gender and income level did not reach statistical significance ($\alpha = 0.05$), and hypotheses H2b and H2c were not supported.

In the SEM analysis, which considered how age, gender, income, and education level interact, all personal factors (gender, age, income level, and education level) showed significant effects, and hypotheses H2b and H2c were supported.

Table 4.31: Comparison of the Results of ANOVA and SEM

Hypothesis	ANOVA Results	SEM Results	Contradictions
H2a	Age is significant (p=0.021)	Age is significant (p<0.001)	The conclusions are consistent
H2b	Gender is not significant (p=0.059)	Gender is significant (p<0.001)	The direct effect of gender on design feature preference is not significant in ANOVA, but the path coefficient is significant in SEM
H2c	Income is not significant (p=0.372)	Income is significant (p<0.001)	ANOVA shows no effect of income, but SEM shows a significant effect of income
H2d	Educational is significant (p=0.021)	Educational is significant (p<0.001)	The conclusions are consistent

This difference in results arises from methodological variations: ANOVA tests only the independent effect of a single variable. SEM accounts for collinearity between variables by integrating them into a multivariate path model, thus providing a more accurate reflection of the net effects of personal factors. For example, the influence of income on design preferences may be obscured by its correlation with education levels.

By adjusting for such confounding variables, SEM reveals the independent driving effect of income on preferences for high-end design choices.

Given SEM's advantage in capturing complex interactions and measuring latent variables (Hoyle, 2012), This research accepts its findings and supports the full confirmation of H2 and its sub-hypotheses (H2a-H2d).

This confirms the systematic impact of several personal characteristics of tourists on their design preferences. While SEM confirmed the hypothesised relationships, ANOVA, employed to test differences among demographic subgroups (e.g., age, income), provides a theoretical basis for market segmentation of cultural souvenirs.

4.6.3 Verification of Hypothesis 3

Hierarchical regression analysis was chosen to test the moderating effects (H3) as it allows for the systematic entry of predictor variables (e.g., design features, demographic factors) and their interaction terms, enabling a clear assessment of the unique variance explained by the moderation effect after controlling for the main effects.

In hierarchical regression analysis, the β value of the interaction term indicates whether the moderating variable strengthens or weakens the relationship between the independent and dependent variables:

- $\beta > 0$: The moderating variable enhances the positive effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable (positive moderation).
- $\beta < 0$: The moderating variable weakens the positive effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable (negative moderation).

4.6.3.1 Age-moderating effect

Table 4.32 presents the results of testing the moderating effect of age on the relationship between cultural souvenir design features and tourists' purchase intention. Model 1 and Model 2 show the effects of design features (X) and age (W) on purchase intention and their interaction effect, respectively.

The main effect analysis (Model 1) shows that the standardised path coefficient of design features (X) on purchase intention is 0.179 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that design features have a significant positive impact on purchase intention. The path coefficient of age (W) on purchase intention is 0.265 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that age itself has an independent positive

effect on purchase intention. The model's explanatory power (adjusted $R^2 = 0.286$) and the F value are significant ($F = 124.891$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that the model is effective overall.

In the moderating effect analysis (Model 2), the coefficient of the interaction term ($X*W$) between design features and age is 0.172 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that age has a significant positive moderating effect on the relationship between design features and purchase intention. The explanatory power of the model improves (adjusted $R^2 = 0.307$), and the F-value remains significant ($F = 120.365$, $p < 0.001$), confirming the presence of the moderating effect.

Table 4.32: Moderating Effect Coefficients of Age

	Model 1	Model 2
X (Design feature)	0.179***	0.143***
W (age)	0.265***	0.235***
X*W (design feature * age)		0.172***
F	124.891***	120.365***
R^2	0.288	0.309
Adjusted R^2	0.286	0.307
<i>Note: *** $P < 0.001$</i>		

The moderating effect test in Table 4.32 shows that age plays a significant positive moderating role between the design features of cultural souvenirs and tourists' purchase intention (Figure 4.9). When the interaction term ($X*W$) between design features and age is introduced into the model, the standardised coefficient of the interaction term is 0.172 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the older the age, the stronger the influence of design features on purchase intention.

This moderating effect suggests that older tourists are more sensitive to design features, whereas purchase decisions made by younger tourists are comparatively less affected. Although the explanatory power of the model has increased slightly ($\Delta R^2 = 0.021$),

the effect size of the interaction term ($\beta = 0.172$) reaches a medium level (Cohen, 1988), which holds practical significance.

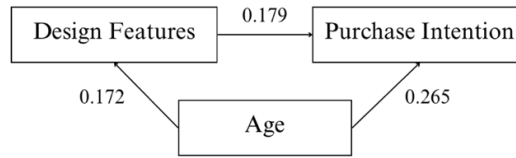


Figure 4.9: Relationship Path between Design Features, Age, and Purchase Intention

In summary, age has a significant positive moderating effect on the relationship between cultural souvenir design features and tourists’ purchase intention, with older people showing greater sensitivity to design. The research findings provide empirical support for age-stratified product development and targeted marketing.

4.6.3.2 Gender Moderating Effect

Table 4.33 shows the test results of the moderating effect of gender on the relationship between cultural souvenir design features and purchase intention. Model 1 and Model 2 examine the impact of design features (X) and gender (W) on purchase intention and their interaction effects.

The moderating effect test in Table 4.33 shows that gender has a significant positive moderating effect on the relationship between the design features of cultural souvenirs and tourists’ purchase intention. The specific analysis is as follows:

In the main effect analysis (Model 1), the standardised path coefficient of design features (X) on purchase intention is 0.200 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that design features (such as aesthetics and practicality) significantly and positively influence purchase decisions. The

primary effect coefficient of gender (W) is 0.565 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that female tourists' purchase intention is significantly higher than that of male tourists.

In the moderating effect analysis (Model 2), the coefficient of the interaction term (X*W) between design features and gender is 0.299 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that gender differences significantly enhance the impact of design features on purchase intention. The positive coefficient of the interaction term suggests that female tourists are more sensitive to design features. For example, the same design features (such as colour coordination or cultural symbols) have a stronger effect on females' purchase intentions than males'. After adding the interaction term, $\Delta R^2 = 0.033$, the model's explanatory power was significantly improved, and the moderating effect is of practical significance.

Table 4.33: Moderating Effect Coefficients of Gender

	Model 1	Model 2
X (Design feature)	0.200***	0.112***
W (gender)	0.565***	0.514***
X*W (design feature * gender)		0.299***
F	103.294***	94.005***
R ²	0.332	0.365
Adjusted R ²	0.330	0.362
<i>Note: *** P<0.001</i>		

In summary, gender is an important moderating variable in the relationship between design features and purchase intention (Figure 4.10), with female tourists being significantly more sensitive to design features than male tourists. The research findings provide empirical evidence for gender-stratified product development and precision marketing.

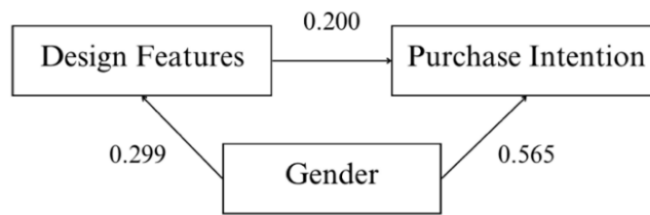


Figure 4.10: Relationship Path between Design Features, Gender, and Purchase Intention

4.6.3.3 Income Level Moderating Effects

Table 4.34 shows the test results of the moderating effect of income level on the relationship between the design features of cultural souvenirs and purchase intention. Model 1 and Model 2 examine the impact of design features (X) and income level (W) on purchase intention and their interaction effect.

The moderating effect test in Table 4.34 shows that income level has a significant positive moderating effect on the relationship between the design features of cultural souvenirs and tourists' willingness to buy. The specific analysis is as follows:

The main effect analysis (Model 1) shows that the standardised path coefficient of design features (X) on purchase intention is 0.170 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that design features (such as aesthetics, practicality, and Unique) significantly and positively drive purchase decisions; the primary effect coefficient of income level (W) is 0.253 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that high-income tourists have a significantly higher willingness to buy than low-income groups, which may be due to their stronger purchasing power or greater emphasis on cultural values.

The moderating effect analysis (Model 2) shows that the interaction between design features and income level has a coefficient of 0.159 ($p < 0.001$), meaning that income level significantly increases how much design features affect purchase intention. The

positive coefficient of the interaction term indicates that tourists with higher incomes are more sensitive to design features. For example, high-income groups are more inclined to pay a premium for souvenirs with sophisticated designs and profound cultural connotations. In contrast, low-income groups may focus more on price or practicality. The adjusted R² increased from 0.291 to 0.310 ($\Delta R^2 = 0.019$). Although the increase was slight, the effect size of the interaction term ($\beta = 0.159$) reached a medium level (Cohen, 1988), which has practical significance.

Table 4.34: Moderating Effect Coefficients of Income Level

	Model 1	Model 2
X (Design feature)	0.170***	0.138***
W (income level)	0.253***	0.236***
X*W (design features * income level)		0.159***
F	127.838***	122.466***
R ²	0.293	0.312
Adjusted R ²	0.291	0.310
<i>Note: ***P<0.001</i>		

In summary, income level is an important moderating variable in the relationship between design features and purchase intention (Figure 4.11). High-income tourists are significantly more sensitive to design features. The research findings provide empirical evidence for product positioning and marketing strategies based on income stratification.

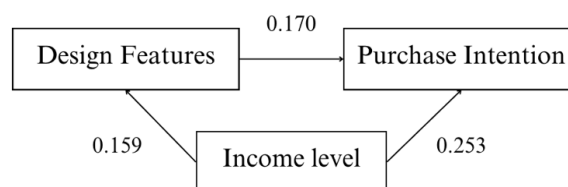


Figure 4.11: Relationship Path between Design Features, Income Level, and Purchase Intention

4.6.3.4 Education Level - Moderating Effect

Table 4.35 presents the test results for the moderating effect of the education level on the relationship between cultural souvenir design features and purchase intention. Models 1 and 2 examine the influence of design features (X) and education level (W) on purchase intention and the interaction effect between the two.

Table 4.35: Moderating Effect Coefficients of Education Level

	Model 1	Model 2
X (Design feature)	0.201***	0.185***
W (education level)	0.280***	0.266***
X*W (Design features* education level)		0.189***
F -number	112.252***	109.316***
R ²	0.267	0.312
Adjusted R ²	0.264	0.310
<i>Note: ***P<0.001</i>		

The moderating effect test in Table 4.35 shows that education level significantly moderates the relationship between the design features of cultural souvenirs and tourists' purchase intention. The specific analysis is as follows:

In the main effect analysis (Model 1), the standardised path coefficient of design features (X) on purchase intention is 0.201 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that design features significantly and positively influence purchase decisions. The primary effect coefficient of education level (W) is 0.280 ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that tourists with higher educational attainment show significantly greater purchase intention than those with lower education levels. This trend may be attributed to a stronger appreciation of cultural connotations or more refined aesthetic sensibilities among the highly educated.

In the moderating effect analysis (Model 2), after introducing the interaction term (X*W) between design features and education level, the coefficient of the interaction term

is 0.189 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the higher the education level, the stronger the influence of design features on purchase intention. For example, highly educated tourists may be more inclined to choose souvenirs that embody historical narratives or traditional craftsmanship. In contrast, those with lower education levels may prioritise practicality or pricing. The explanatory power of the model was notably enhanced after adding the interaction term (adjusted R^2 increased from 0.264 to 0.310), and the interaction term's effect size ($\beta = 0.189$) reached a medium level (Cohen, 1988), signifying that the moderating effect is of practical importance. The F-values for Models 1 and 2 were 112.252 and 109.316, respectively, which were statistically significant, indicating a satisfactory model fit.

In summary, education level significantly moderates design features and purchase intention (Figure 4.12). Tourists with higher education levels have significantly higher purchase intentions for cultural souvenirs than tourists with lower education levels.

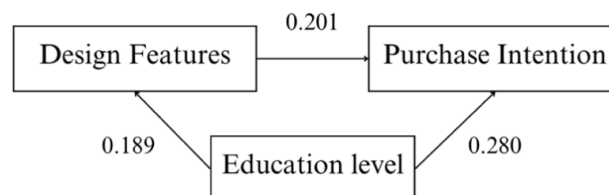


Figure 4.12: Relationship Path between Design Features, Education Level and Purchase Intention

4.6.3.5 H3 Results Verification

According to the results of the moderating effect test, the verification conclusions of hypothesis H3 and its sub-hypotheses are as follows (Table 4.36).

H3a, interaction effect coefficient ($X*W$) = 0.172 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that age positively moderates the relationship between design features and purchase intention, and

older tourists are more sensitive to design features. This suggests that the hypothesis receives support.

H3b, $X*W = 0.299$ ($p < 0.001$), showing that gender differences significantly enhance the impact of design features, and female tourists' purchase intention is more easily driven by design. This indicates that the hypothesis is supported.

Table 4.36: H3 Hypothesis Verification

Research Hypothesis		MV	X*W	P	Decision
H3: Tourists' personal factors significantly moderate the relationship between the design features of cultural souvenirs and their purchase intentions.	H3a: Tourists' age significantly moderates the relationship between design features and purchase intentions.	Age	0.172	***	Supported
	H3b: Tourists' gender significantly moderates the relationship between design features and purchase intentions.	Gender	0.299	***	Supported
	H3c: Tourists' income level significantly moderates the relationship between design features and purchase intentions.	Income Level	0.159	***	Supported
	H3d: Tourists' educational level significantly moderates the relationship between design features and purchase intentions.	Education Level	0.189	***	Supported
<i>Note: ***$P < 0.001$; Moderator Variable = MV; Interaction effect coefficient = $X*W$</i>					

H3c, $X*W = 0.159$ ($p < 0.001$), indicating that high-income groups respond more strongly to design features and are more inclined to pay a premium for high-end designs. This indicates that the hypothesis is supported.

H3d, $X^*W = 0.189$ ($p < 0.001$), indicating that highly educated groups attach more importance to the cultural connotation of design features, and their purchase intention is more significantly affected by design. The result indicates that the hypothesis is supported.

In summary, all sub-hypotheses of H3 (H3a–H3d) passed the test, confirming that tourists’ age, gender, income level, and education level have a significant positive moderating effect on the relationship between cultural souvenir design features and purchase intention.

4.6.4 Verification of Hypothesis 4

4.6.4.1 Model Fit Assessment

According to the fit indices in Table 4.37, the overall fit of the H4 structural equation model (SEM) meets academic standards.

Table 4.37: H4 SEM Fit Indices

Fit index	χ^2/df	RMSEA	NFI	IFI	CFI	GFI	AGFI
Evaluation Criteria	$1 < \chi^2/df < 3$	<0.08	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9
Model Standards	2.75	0.053	0.900	0.920	0.920	0.910	0.908

In this model, $\chi^2/df=2.75$ (standard range 1-3), which indicates that the model complexity is well balanced with the sample size, the ratio of the model’s degrees of freedom to the chi-square value is appropriate, and that it has a good fit.

RMSEA = 0.053 (< 0.08), indicating that the model error is small and the fitting accuracy is high. NFI = 0.900, IFI = 0.920, CFI = 0.920 (all ≥ 0.9), indicating that the model explains the observed data well during the fitting process. GFI = 0.910, AGFI = 0.908 (exceeding 0.9), indicating that the model’s overall fit is good and close to the ideal level.

This structural equation model demonstrates a relatively ideal fit and meets relevant statistical standards.

4.6.4.2 Path Coefficients and Direct Effects

Table 4.38 presents the coefficient estimates for each path in the structural equation model (including β , B, S.E., C.R., and p). This table concerns the causal relationships between multiple variables, particularly the influence of design features on other variables.

Table 4.38: Path Coefficient Table for H4 Structural Equation Model

Path			B	β	S.E.	C.R.	P
ACCS	<---	DF	0.526	0.525	0.044	11.94	***
PBA	<---	DF	0.525	0.532	0.044	11.975	***
ATI	<---	DF	0.477	0.474	0.044	10.756	***
PI	<---	ACCS	0.116	0.119	0.046	2.547	0.011
PI	<---	PBA	0.366	0.343	0.046	4.712	***
PI	<---	ATI	0.188	0.192	0.044	4.248	***
PI	<---	DF	0.250	0.255	0.055	4.514	***
U7	<---	DF	1	0.793			
U6	<---	DF	1.018	0.806	0.044	23.085	***
U5	<---	DF	0.948	0.793	0.042	22.569	***
U4	<---	DF	0.984	0.783	0.044	22.187	***
U3	<---	DF	0.96	0.785	0.043	22.297	***
U2	<---	DF	0.982	0.791	0.044	22.492	***
U1	<---	DF	1.033	0.802	0.045	22.931	***
A6	<---	DF	0.981	0.791	0.044	22.525	***
A5	<---	DF	0.973	0.783	0.044	22.197	***
A4	<---	DF	0.953	0.788	0.043	22.399	***
A3	<---	DF	0.962	0.767	0.045	21.607	***
A2	<---	DF	1.040	0.802	0.045	22.94	***
A1	<---	DF	1.027	0.805	0.045	23.031	***
CT 5	<---	DF	1.031	0.802	0.045	22.919	***
CT 4	<---	DF	0.999	0.788	0.045	22.401	***
CT 3	<---	DF	1.018	0.804	0.044	22.989	***
CT 2	<---	DF	1.062	0.802	0.046	22.933	***
CT 1	<---	DF	1.237	0.953	0.042	29.444	***
ACS 1	<---	ACCS	1	0.791			
ACS 2	<---	ACCS	1.019	0.787	0.049	20.617	***
ACS 3	<---	ACCS	0.998	0.78	0.049	20.392	***
ACS 4	<---	ACCS	0.957	0.777	0.047	20.298	***

Table 4.38 continued

ACS 5	<---	ACCS	0.972	0.775	0.048	20.252	***
PBA 5	<---	PBA	1	0.772			
PBA 4	<---	PBA	0.983	0.77	0.050	19.54	***
PBA 3	<---	PBA	1.023	0.798	0.050	20.351	***
PBA 2	<---	PBA	1.028	0.801	0.050	20.431	***
PBA 1	<---	PBA	1.018	0.763	0.053	19.353	***
PBA 5	<---	ATI	1	0.782			
ATIP 4	<---	ATI	0.959	0.772	0.048	19.772	***
ATIP 3	<---	ATI	0.960	0.759	0.050	19.379	***
ATIP 2	<---	ATI	1.027	0.79	0.051	20.291	***
ATIP 1	<---	ATI	0.971	0.775	0.049	19.851	***
PM 1	<---	PI	1	0.907			
PM 2	<---	PI	0.871	0.785	0.033	26.466	***
PM 3	<---	PI	0.825	0.755	0.033	24.633	***
PM 4	<---	PI	0.825	0.758	0.033	24.823	***
PM 5	<---	PI	0.819	0.754	0.033	24.581	***
PA 1	<---	PI	0.837	0.748	0.035	24.24	***
PA 2	<---	PI	0.809	0.747	0.034	24.146	***
PA 3	<---	PI	0.841	0.769	0.033	25.484	***
PA 4	<---	PI	0.853	0.767	0.034	25.325	***
PA 5	<---	PI	0.769	0.725	0.033	22.956	***
PB 1	<---	PI	0.767	0.738	0.032	23.665	***
PB 2	<---	PI	0.797	0.741	0.033	23.843	***
PB 3	<---	PI	0.821	0.751	0.034	24.367	***
PB 4	<---	PI	0.870	0.771	0.034	25.562	***
PB 5	<---	PI	0.830	0.741	0.035	23.846	***

Note: ***P<0.001; Authenticity Cognition of Cultural Souvenirs=ACCS; Purchase Behaviour and Authenticity=PBA; Attitudes Towards Imitations=ATI; Attitude Towards Imitation Products=ATIP; Design Features=DF; Purchase Intention=PI; Purchase Attitude=PA; Purchase Behaviour=PB; Purchase Motivation=PM; Care and travel=CT; Authenticity of Cultural Souvenirs=ACS; Unique=U; Aesthetic=A

The path analysis in Table 4.38 reveals the complex mechanism through which cultural souvenirs' design features (DF) influence tourists' purchase intention (PI), including both direct effects and the indirect stimulation of purchase decisions via multiple mediating variables. Additionally, the critical ratios (C.R. > 10) for all paths and $p < 0.001$ show that the effect of design features on the mediating variables is significant. The following is a detailed analysis.

The direct impact of design features (DF) on the mediating variables. DF, as the core independent variable, shows significant and strongly positive impacts on the three mediating variables:

- perceived authenticity of cultural souvenirs (ACCS): $\beta = 0.525$ ($p < 0.001$);
- Purchasing behaviour and authenticity (PBA): $\beta = 0.532$ ($p < 0.001$). This has the strongest impact among all paths, indicating that design features exert a core driving effect on tourists' purchasing behaviour and their recognition of authenticity.
- Attitude towards imitations (ATI): $\beta = 0.474$ ($p < 0.001$). This shows that design features significantly reduce tourists' acceptance of imitations.

The impact of mediating variables on purchase intention (PI). All three mediating variables have significant but varying effects on PI:

- ACCS \rightarrow PI: $\beta = 0.119$ ($p = 0.011$). The effect size is small but statistically significant, indicating that, although tourists' perceptions of authenticity can improve purchase intention, the effect is limited.
- PBA \rightarrow PI: $\beta = 0.343$ ($p < 0.001$), representing the strongest effect among the mediating paths. This indicates that the association between actual purchase behaviour and perceived authenticity strongly drives repurchase or recommendation intentions.
- ATI \rightarrow PI: $\beta = 0.192$ ($p < 0.001$), suggesting that tourists' rejection of counterfeits indirectly promotes purchasing genuine products.

The direct effect of design features (DF) on purchase intention (PI). Although DF influences PI indirectly via mediating variables, its direct effect remains significant.

$\beta = 0.255$ ($p < 0.001$), indicating that even without considering perceived authenticity, purchasing behaviour or attitudes towards imitations, design features directly account for 25.5% of the variation in purchase intention. Tourists may be driven to buy souvenirs simply due to their visual appeal (e.g., colour combinations) or functionality (e.g., portability) without necessarily engaging in a deeper reflection on cultural authenticity. The H4 SEM model diagram is shown in Figure 4.13.

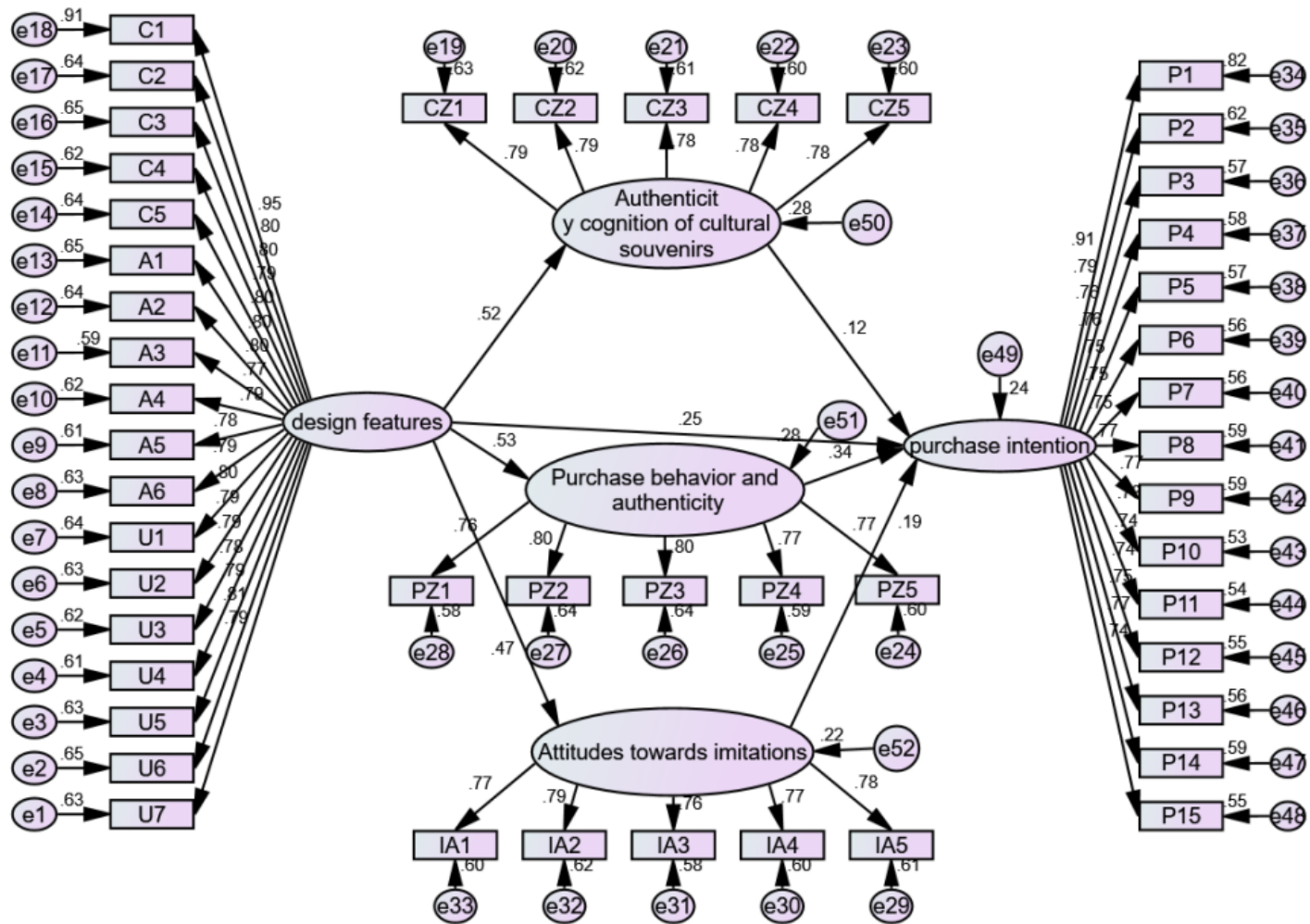


Figure 4.13: H4 SEM mode

4.6.4.3 Bootstrap Mediation Effect Test

Focusing solely on direct effects underestimates the overall impact of design features on purchasing intentions. This research uses AMOS software to run Bootstrap, output Table 4.39, and verify the multiple mediation paths of H4a–H4c. Since the mediation effect's bias-corrected 95% confidence interval (CI) does not contain 0, a substantial mediation effect was verified (Hayes, 2018). Not only were the theoretical hypotheses (H4a–H4c) confirmed, but the contribution intensity of each path was quantified, and the complex mechanism by which design characteristics influence purchasing intentions was revealed. A basis was provided for formulating comprehensive strategies.

Table 4.39: Mediation Effect Table of H4 Structural Equation

Research Hypothesis		Direct Effect				Indirect Effect			
		Effect Size	SE	Bias-Corrected 95%CI		Effect Size	SE	Bias-Corrected 95%CI	
				Lower	Upper			Lower	Upper
H4	H4a	0.255	0.032	0.194	0.436	0.062	0.003	0.014	0.177
	H4b	0.255	0.032	0.194	0.436	0.182	0.029	0.105	0.311
	H4c	0.255	0.032	0.194	0.436	0.091	0.017	0.019	0.205

Note: Standard Error=SE

H4a (Indirect effect of perceived authenticity): IE = 0.062, and the confidence interval (CI) does not contain 0, indicating that design features indirectly enhance purchase intention by enhancing tourists' perception of the authenticity of cultural souvenirs.

H4b (Indirect effect of purchase behaviour and authenticity): IE = 0.182, indicating that tourists' actual purchase behaviour and perceived authenticity jointly strengthen the driving force of design features on purchase intention.

H4c (Indirect effect of attitude towards imitations): $IE = 0.091$, indicating that tourists' negative attitude towards imitations indirectly promotes their willingness to purchase genuine cultural souvenirs.

In summary, the indirect effect test indicates that the impact of design features on purchase intention involves multiple pathways: authenticity cognition, purchase behaviour, and attitude towards imitation products. The mediating role of authenticity reflects Lee et al.'s (2009) theory of souvenir authenticity. This supports the theoretical framework of "design features–perceived authenticity-purchase decision" in This research, confirming that the authenticity of cultural souvenirs is the key link in converting design value into purchase behaviour.

4.6.4.4 H4 Results Verification

Through the direct effect and indirect effect tests, the Bias-Corrected 95% CI of H4a, H4b, and H4c do not contain 0, and the path coefficient is significant, which verifies the indirect role of the authenticity of cultural souvenirs between design features and purchase intention. H4 and its sub-hypotheses (H4a–H4c) are all supported (Table 4.40).

In summary, total effect = direct effect (0.255) + indirect effect (0.062 + 0.182 + 0.091) = 0.590. The direct effect accounts for 43%: the aesthetics and functionality of the design features directly affect the purchase decision; the indirect effect accounts for 57%: authenticity-related variables further amplify the role of design features. The strength of the indirect effect follows the order: $H4b > H4c > H4a$.

Table 4.40: H4 Hypothesis Verification

Research Hypothesis		MV	DE	IE	CI	β	Decision
H4	H4a	ACCS	0.255***	0.062***	[0.014, 0.177]	DF→ACCS: $\beta=0.525$ *** ACCS→PI: $\beta=0.119$ *	Supported
	H4b	PBA	0.255***	0.182***	[0.105, 0.311]	DF→PBA: $\beta=0.532$ *** PBA→PI: $\beta=0.343$ ***	Supported
	H4c	ATI	0.255***	0.091***	[0.019, 0.205]	DF→ATI: $\beta=0.474$ *** ATI→PI: $\beta=0.192$ ***	Supported

4.7 Qualitative Analysis

To triangulate quantitative findings, thematic analysis of open-ended responses revealed nuanced consumer preferences. This research uses Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-stage thematic analysis approach to code systematically and extract themes from the responses to the two open-ended questions, F1 and F2. The specific steps are as follows.

4.7.1 Data Preparation and Cleaning

The original data included 620 open-ended questions and replies. After careful screening, 300 invalid samples (including “not filled in” and irrelevant information) were removed, leaving 320 valid texts. The screening criteria are:

- Focus on cultural souvenir preferences or suggestions for improvement.
- Avoid using repetitious terms, advertising content, or meaningless symbols.
- Make sure each text contains entire semantic units.

4.7.2 Analysis of Question F1

The first step is to become familiar with the data. This research employs the Chinese word cloud (Appendix M) and the translated version (Figure 4.14) generated by “Wenjuanxing” to aid visual analysis. The font size indicates the frequency of occurrence in the responses.



Figure 4.14: F1 Question Word Cloud

The second step is to generate the initial codes. The researcher reviewed the answers to question F1 multiple times and combined the size of the keywords occurring in the word cloud to sort, categorise, and classify the responses of tourists based on their preferences for cultural gifts, resulting in 10 initial codes (Table 4.41).

Table 4.41: Initial Code Generation Table for F1 Question

Name	Original Keywords	Semantic Unit Example	Frequency	Word Cloud Keywords
F1 Education Value Extension	“Books”, “Historical document reproductions”, “Traditional games”, “Learning for children”	I bought a book about local history because I wanted my children to understand the culture.	89	Books, Reproductions of Historical Documents

Table 4.41 continued

F2 Traditional Craft Carrier	“Calligraphy”, “Ceramics”, “Sculpture”, “Traditional toys”	I am particularly attracted to the traditional patterns on ceramics, which allow me to feel the historical heritage.	76	Traditional Toys, Handcrafts, Ceramics, Calligraphy, Painting
F3 Unique Characterisation	“Only here”, “One of a kind”, “Can’t be found anywhere else”	I want to buy souvenirs that can’t be found anywhere else, such as traditional food here	68	Traditional Cuisine, Traditional Games, Representative
F4 Practical Function Integration	“Clothing”, “Daily use”, “Decorations”, “Musical instruments”	I bought a traditional scarf, which is both beautiful and warm	52	Apparel, Traditional Decorations
F5 Emotional Connection Symbol	“Memorial significance”, “Memories”, “Gift”, “Commemorative coins”	Collecting commemorative coins is to remember the feelings of this trip	47	Commemorative Coins, Stamps
F6 Artistic Aesthetic Expression	“Painting” “Sculpture details” “Colour matching” “Aesthetic value”	The carving craftsmanship of the handicrafts is very exquisite, like a work of art	41	Handicrafts, Painting
F7 Cultural Symbol Concentration	“Representing local culture”, “National characteristics”, “Symbolic symbols”	Souvenirs should be like badges, condensing the core symbols of local culture	35	Musical Instruments, Ceramics
F8 Is Light and Easy to Carry	“Small size”, “Light weight”, “Easy to carry”	I prefer small souvenirs, as they are too big to bring back home.	28	Souvenir, Stamp
F9 Price Rationality	“High cost performance”, “Reasonable price”, “Value for money”	Although I like ceramics, I didn’t buy them because the prices were too high.	22	Traditional Cuisine

The next step involved creating and integrating the theme. Based on the original codes' semantic association and tourist demands dimensions, this research used cluster analysis to combine the 10 initial codes into five themes (Table 4.42).

Table 4.42: Initial Code Cluster Analysis Table

Name	Code	Merger Basis	Topic Definition
T11 Cultural inheritance and education	F1 F7	Both F1 and F7 contribute to the dissemination and codified expression of cultural knowledge. Tourists enhance their cultural understanding through souvenirs, anticipating their role as vessels of regional cultural significance.	As carriers of cultural memory, souvenirs have educational and symbolic significance, helping tourists understand and disseminate culture.
T12 Traditional artistic expression	F2 F6	Both F2 and F6 underscore traditional crafts' aesthetic importance and historical legacy, with tourists valuing artisanal precision and artistic expression over purely functional aspects.	An art form centred on traditional craftsmanship that reflects regional culture's historical depth and aesthetic value.
T13 Unique and innovation combined	F3 F10	Both F3 and F10 highlight the distinct positioning of souvenirs, with tourists seeking local Unique and innovative designs that blend traditional motifs with modern lifestyles.	Combining regional Unique with modern innovative design meets tourists' dual needs for cultural identity and practical aesthetics.
T14 Functionality and convenience	F4 F8	F4 and F8 focus on the practical utility of souvenirs, with tourists prioritising items that combine cultural resonance with functional portability.	In addition to cultural attributes, souvenirs must meet practical usage needs and conform to the convenience requirements of tourism consumption.
T15 Emotional connection and consumer decision-making	F5 F9	F5 and F9 reflect emotional impulses and rational consumption, respectively, with tourists forming emotional ties through souvenirs, though purchasing decisions remain price-sensitive.	Souvenirs must balance emotional value and price acceptability to stimulate tourists' willingness to purchase.

Table 4.43: Theme Definition and Naming Table

Core Themes	Definition	Naming Basis	Data Support
T11 Cultural inheritance and education	As carriers of cultural memory, souvenirs help tourists understand, spread and preserve regional cultural knowledge through symbolic design and educational functions.	Emphasise the symbolic meaning and knowledge-dissemination function of cultural symbols.	F1, F7
T12 Traditional Art Expression	This art form, with traditional craftsmanship at its core, reflects the historical depth and artistic value through aesthetic details, satisfying tourists' pursuit of cultural aesthetics.	Highlighting the dual attributes of "traditional craftsmanship" and "artistic aesthetics"	F2, F6
T13 Regional Unique and innovative transformation	Souvenirs must combine regional Unique with modern innovative design to balance cultural identity and adaptability to contemporary life scenarios.	The original "Unique and innovation integration" was revised, and "transformation" was added to emphasise the creative reconstruction of traditional elements.	F3, F10
T14 Functional utility and scene adaptation	Souvenirs must have daily use value and be suitable for tourism consumption scenarios, and meet actual functional needs and consumption convenience in addition to cultural significance.	Expand "convenience" to "scenario adaptation", covering usage scenarios and travel behaviour characteristics.	F4, F8
T15 Emotional connection and price threshold	Souvenirs establish an emotional connection between tourists and culture through emotional symbols. However, their purchasing behaviour is constrained by price rationality, and a balance must be struck between emotional value and consumption budget.	Breaking down "consumption decision" into "price threshold" highlights the regulatory role of price on emotional drive.	F5, F9

Tourists' demand for cultural souvenirs can be classified into five main themes using cluster analysis: cultural heritage and education, traditional art expression, originality and innovation integration, functional practicality and convenience, emotional connection, and

consumption decision. This classification preserves the diversity of the original data and increases theoretical explanatory power through logical integration, offering a clear framework for future design efforts.

Then, the theme was reviewed and revised. This research carried out boundary verification and data feedback revision during the theme review on the five initially generated themes (Table 4.43). The revised themes created a logical chain of “cultural symbols - artistic expression - functional needs - consumer behaviour”.

Finally, this research uncovers the multidimensional aspects of travelers’ cultural souvenir choices using thematic analysis. Five core themes inspire cultural souvenir design strategies:

- Integrating symbolisation with educational functions, strengthening cultural symbolic meaning (e.g., regional badges and historical symbols), and improving knowledge dissemination through additional educational content (e.g., QR codes linking cultural stories).
- The modern transformation of traditional handicraft incorporates traditional components (e.g., ceramic patterns and calligraphy typefaces) into practical products (e.g., home items and digital accessories), considering cultural values and contemporary aesthetics.
- Tiered pricing and scene adaptability, creating price gradient products for various customer groups (e.g., high-end limited editions and low-cost mementoes), and optimising mobility design (e.g., foldable packaging and lightweight materials).

- Technology provides experience enhancements, such as deploying AR technology to explain the crafting process or boosting the interactive experience through virtual try-ons to fulfil young tourists’ demand for technology integration (for example, the “AR Calligraphy Experience Hall”).

In summary, tourists’ need for cultural souvenirs has a dual direction of “traditional symbol bearing” and “modern value extension”. Designers must balance cultural Unique, functional usefulness, and emotional value while improving product scene adaptability through innovative modification. The topic framework developed in This research serves as a theoretical foundation for creating cultural souvenirs and creates the groundwork for the precision of destination marketing plans.

4.7.3 Analysis of Question F2

First, this research familiarised ourselves with the data and conducted basic coding. The researchers read the tourists’ responses repeatedly and then used word frequency analysis to extract semantic units and mark keywords. Using open coding, 10 basic codes were created (Table 4.44).

Table 4.44: Initial Code Generation Table for F2 Question

Name	Original keywords	Semantic unit example	Frequency
F1 Quality Improvement	High-quality materials, Strict quality control, Durability	I hope to use better materials to prevent the souvenirs from being easily damaged.	62
F2 Cultural Interactive Experience	Cultural Stories, Interactive Experience Area, Handmade	It would be more memorable if I could participate in making the ceramics myself.	58

Table 4.44 continued

F3 Diversification and Personalisation	Various categories, Customised service, Limited edition	Different tourists like different styles, so it is recommended that more options be introduced.	49
F4 Social Media Marketing	Social Media Promotion, Joint Promotion, Limited Time Offer	Young people will be more interested if we show the production process on Douyin.	45
F5 Environmental Sustainability	Environmentally friendly materials, Sustainable production, Charity	The packaging uses biodegradable materials, which are more environmentally friendly.	38
F6 Technology Fusion	AR/VR technology, Intelligent tour guide, Virtual experience	It is so cool to scan the souvenirs with your phone and see the production process!	34
F7 Tiered Pricing	Different price ranges, Consumption levels, and Reasonable prices	There should be cheap little items as well as high- end collectables.	29
F8 Brand Building	Brand Story, Celebrity Collaboration, Artist Collaboration	Souvenirs will be more attractive if designed in collaboration with local artists.	26
F9 travel scene adaptation	Sales points within tourist attractions, Integration of tourist routes, and Convenient purchase	It is more convenient to buy souvenirs directly at the exit of the tourist attraction without having to look for them.	22
F10 feedback improvements	Collect feedback, Continuous improvement, User needs	Regularly asking tourists for their opinions will help us understand which designs need improvement.	18

Then followed theme creation and integration. Using cluster analysis, this research combined the ten initial codes into four key themes (Table 4.45).

This research has thoroughly reviewed the four theme studies to ensure comprehensive data coverage, which this research analyse and discuss next. Tourists' suggestions for upgrading cultural souvenirs are summarised into four main categories:

Enhance quality and value: optimise materials and craftsmanship, reinforce cultural significance, and strengthen brand image. Tourists generally call for using high-quality, durable materials (such as solid wood or environmentally friendly fabrics) and improved quality control during production to avoid defective items impacting the overall experience. It is recommended that souvenirs incorporate cultural background information (e.g., story cards or QR code links) to increase cultural value through detailed historical or craftsmanship introductions. Collaboration with local artists and influencers can also improve the brand’s cultural depth and visual identity.

Table 4.45: F2 Question Topic Clustering Table

Core Themes	Initial Code	Merge Logic
T21 Quality and value upgrade	F1 F8	Quality optimisation and brand narrative jointly enhance the intrinsic value of souvenirs and increase tourists’ trust and willingness to purchase.
T22 Reconstruction of cultural experience	F2 F6	Deepen tourists’ sense of cultural participation through interactive design (hand-made) and technological means (such as AR).
T23 Precise market adaptation	F3 F7 F9	From product diversity and price gradient to sales scenarios, fully matching the differentiated needs of tourists.
T24 Sustainability and social responsibility	F4 F5 F10	Environmentally friendly production, social engagement and user feedback form a closed loop, reflecting the brand’s social responsibility and market sensitivity.

Experience and interactive innovation: Promote participatory experiences, integrate design with technology, diversify product offerings, encourage personalisation, and develop scenario-based sales and tiered pricing strategies. Interactive workshops (such as pottery-making or calligraphy sessions) at scenic locations allow tourists to create souvenirs, enhancing emotional engagement. AR/VR technologies can showcase the production process or provide deeper cultural insights via smart guides to increase appeal, particularly

for younger visitors. Regarding market adaptation and convenience, souvenirs should be offered in various styles and price points (from affordable tokens to premium collectables), with personalised services such as engraving and bespoke patterns. Additional sales points should be placed at exits and rest areas of key attractions, and souvenirs should be integrated into tourist route planning to support immediate purchase. This approach caters to low-, middle-, and high-end consumer groups, avoiding the loss of potential customers.

Sustainability and social responsibility: Emphasise environmental protection, integrate social responsibility, and establish dynamic stakeholder feedback channels. Use biodegradable packaging and recycled materials, and convey environmental messages through souvenirs (e.g., by including eco-awareness booklets). Allocate part of the revenue to support cultural heritage preservation or community development, thereby improving the brand image and fostering tourists' sense of identity and loyalty. Regular feedback collection and responsive adjustments to changing consumer needs are also essential.

In summary, the thematic analysis of open-ended responses provides rich contextualization for the quantitative model. The qualitative emphasis on “Cultural inheritance and education” (T11) and “Traditional artistic expression” (T12) directly mirrors the quantitative importance of “Authenticity Cognition” (H4a). Similarly, the demand for “Functional utility and scene adaptation” (T14) and “Light and Easy to Carry” (F8) in the qualitative data empirically grounds the high path coefficient of the “Care and Travel” dimension (H1a). Furthermore, the call for “Technology Fusion” (F6) and “Diversification and Personalisation” (F3) in the suggestions aligns with the quantitative finding that “Unique” drives purchase intention, suggesting that innovation is a key pathway to achieving perceived

Unique. This triangulation confirms that the statistical relationships in the model encapsulate the lived experiences and voiced priorities of Chinese tourists.

Tourists expect cultural gifts to retain traditional characteristics while being high-quality, functional, engaging, and socially responsible. By optimising product design, enriching consumption scenarios, leveraging technological innovation, and embracing sustainable development principles, this research can significantly enhance tourist satisfaction and willingness to purchase, while promoting innovation and upgrading the cultural souvenir market.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter uses a questionnaire to validate the four hypotheses (Table 4.46) and the corresponding framework (Figure 4.15) developed in This research; it addresses the three research questions and fulfils the three research objectives.

Basis for completing Objective 1: Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to verify the direct effect ($\beta=0.255$) and total effect (0.590) of design features on purchase intention, as well as to quantify the contribution of each sub-dimension (H1a–H1c). Reliability and validity analyses (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.95$) and factor analysis (KMO = 0.982) ensured the measurement tool's validity and supported the robustness of the conclusion.

Basis for completing Objective 2 was completed by using ANOVA and t-tests, which showed that demographic factors like age, gender, income, and education level significantly influenced design features, purchase intention, and authenticity.

Basis for completion of Objective 3: Mediation effect analysis (Bias-Corrected 95% CI) verified the mediating role of authenticity in the path of “design features → perceived authenticity → purchase intention”; Correlation analysis indicated that design features were significantly positively correlated with perceived authenticity ($r = 0.469$, $p < 0.01$), supporting the synergy between the two in driving consumer decisions.

In addition, this research identified tourist preferences and suggestions for improvement through qualitative analysis of open questions F1 and F2. The findings from the qualitative analysis further enrich the quantitative results, revealing tourists’ multidimensional needs - including cultural heritage and education, traditional artistic expression, functionality, uniqueness, and emotional connection - and proposing a series of concrete recommendations for quality enhancement, experience innovation, precise market adaptation, and sustainable development.

These robust empirical findings provide substantial data support for the subsequent discussion chapter. Building on this foundation, the next chapter will delve into the interpretation of these results, engage with existing theoretical literature, explore their deeper managerial implications, and address the core research questions posed by This research.

Table 4.46: Summary of Hypothesis Verification

H1-Method: SEM				
Sub-hypothesis	β	p-value	Decision	Key data sources
H1a (Care and Travel)	0.619	<0.001	Supported	Table 4.25
H1b (Aesthetic)	0.635	<0.001	Supported	
H1c (Unique)	0.499	<0.001	Supported	
H2-Method: SEM				
Sub-hypothesis	β	p-value	Decision	Key data sources
H2a(Age)	0.167	<0.001	Supported	Table 4.29
H2b(Gender)	0.249	<0.001	Supported	
H2c(Income)	0.202	<0.001	Supported	
H2d (Education level)	0.150	<0.001	Supported	
H3-Method: Hierarchical regression analysis				
Sub-hypothesis	X * W	p-value	Decision	Key data sources
H3a(Age adjustment)	0.172	<0.001	Supported	Table 4.32
H3b (Gender adjustment)	0.299	<0.001	Supported	Table 4.33
H3c (Income adjustment)	0.159	<0.001	Supported	Table 4.34
H3d (Education adjustment)	0.189	<0.001	Supported	Table 4.35
H4-Method: SEM, Bootstrap mediation test				
Sub-hypothesis	IE	Bias-Corrected 95% CI	Decision	Key data sources
H4a (Authenticity Cognition Mediator)	0.062	[0.014, 0.177]	Supported	Table 4.39
H4b (Purchasing behaviour and authenticity mediation)	0.182	[0.105, 0.311]	Supported	
H4c (Medium of attitude towards imitation products)	0.091	[0.019, 0.205]	Supported	
<p><i>Note:</i> This table summarises the verification results for all hypotheses (H1 – H4). For H1 – H3, a hypothesis is considered supported if the p-value is less than 0.05. For H4, mediation is considered significant if the bias-corrected 95% confidence interval (CI) does not include zero. ACCS = Authenticity Cognition of Cultural Souvenirs; PBA = Purchase Behaviour and Authenticity; ATI = Attitudes Towards Imitations.</p>				

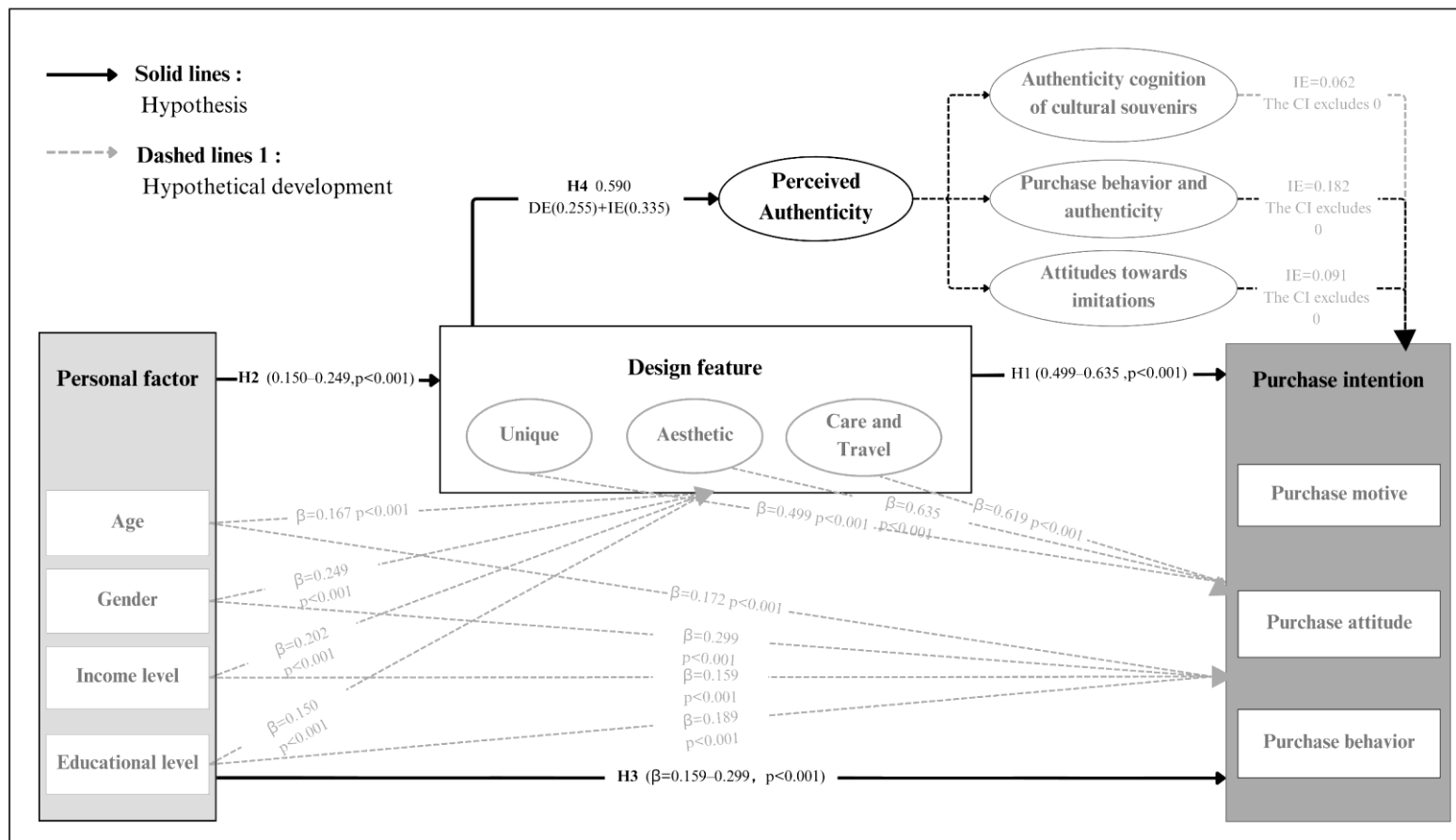


Figure 4.15: Research Hypothesis Verification Diagram

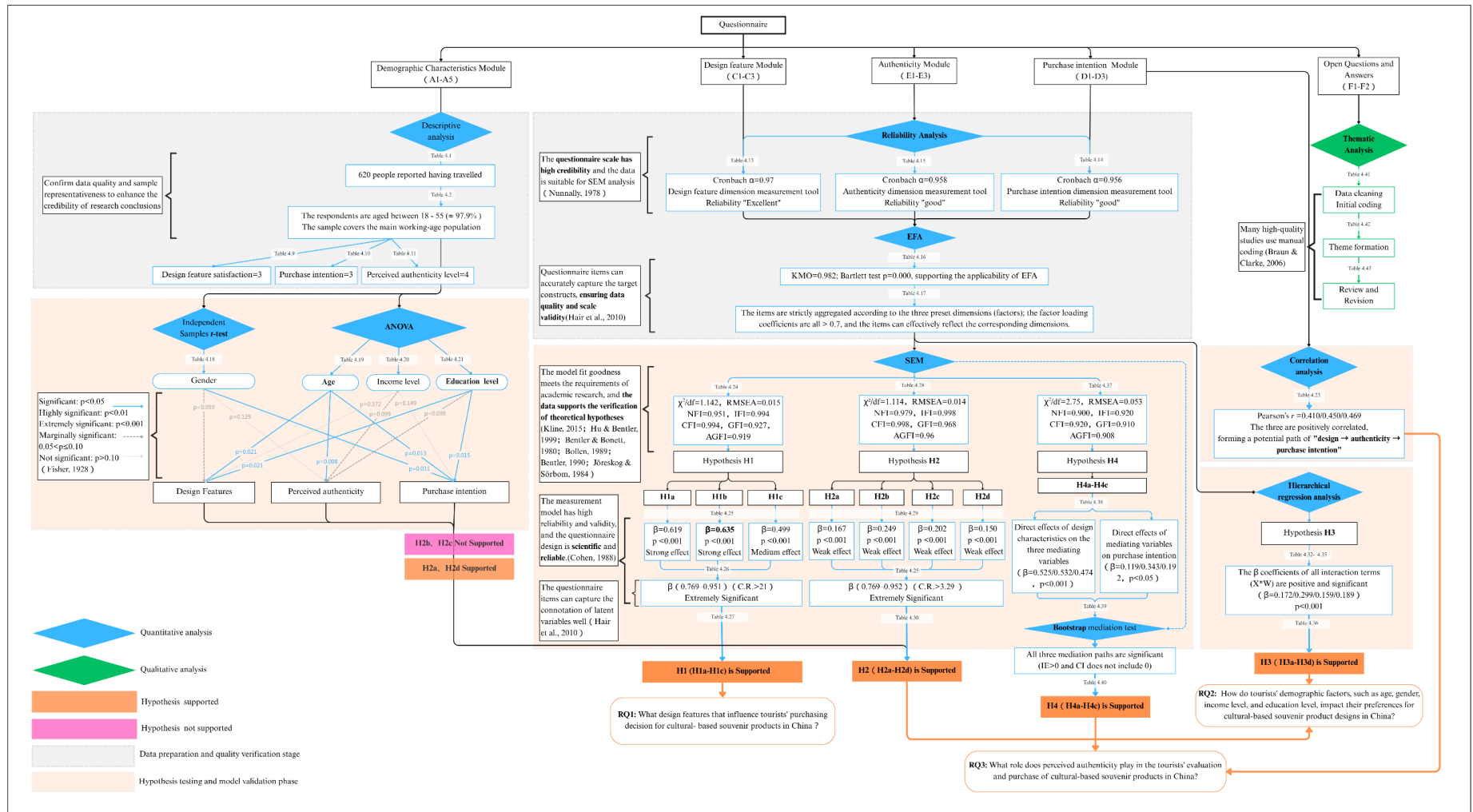


Figure 4.16: Research Flow Chart

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The empirical findings presented in Chapter 4 have clearly delineated the statistically significant relationships between variables and the outcomes of the hypothesis testing. Building upon these results, this chapter aims to provide an in-depth interpretation and discussion of the findings. This research will situate the core insights of This research - namely, the driving role of design characteristics, the segmenting influence of demographic factors, and the mediating mechanism of perceived authenticity: within a broader theoretical context.

This chapter will systematically address each of the three research questions, examining how the design features of cultural souvenirs influence the decision-making processes of Chinese tourists, why design preferences vary across different demographic segments, and the pivotal role played by perceived authenticity. Through this discussion, the empirical data will be elevated to the level of theoretical insight.

5.2 Design Features Influencing Chinese Tourists' Decisions in Purchasing Cultural Souvenirs

To systematically address Research Question One, this section first recapitulates the core findings: Through SEM and thematic analysis, this research confirmed that cultural souvenir design aspects directly influence purchasing decisions. The findings revealed that the three aspects of design characteristics, “Aesthetic, Care and Travel, Unique”, all had a

strong and favourable impact on purchase intention, with a priority ranking of “Aesthetics > Care and Travel > Unique” (Table 4.26).

Research Question 1: What are the salient design features (encompassing the Aesthetic, Unique, and Care and Travel dimensions, with a focus on their symbolic meaning) of cultural souvenirs that significantly influence Chinese tourists’ purchase intentions?

5.2.1 Aesthetic: Visual Expression of Cultural Symbols

A quantitative investigation revealed that aesthetic elements had the most significant influence on buying intention, and the high purchase rate validates the aesthetic value. 56.77% of tourists purchased “Artworks/Paintings”, and 62.74% purchased “Accessories” (Table 4.5).

In addition to these quantitative findings, qualitative analysis demonstrated that tourists prioritise visual impact. For example, one respondent noted, “The traditional patterns on ceramics are particularly attractive to me and are worth collecting like works of art” (T12). Choosing exquisite souvenirs as gifts can satisfy the “face” needs (Jiang et al., 2015); for example, another respondent noted, “Embroidered scarves are both beautiful and can show cultural taste” (T14).

The dominant influence of the Aesthetic dimension signifies that, for Chinese tourists, the visual appeal and symbolic meaning of a souvenir serve as the primary signal triggering purchase decisions. Aesthetic design influences consumption via visual pleasure and symbolic symbolism. This prioritization of aesthetic value reinforces the findings of Littrell et al. (1994) and Vasheghani-Farahani et al. (2014), who identified visual appeal as a primary criterion in souvenir selection across different cultures.

This outcome may stem from the emphasis on “face” (mianzi) and visual display within Chinese consumer culture (Jiang et al., 2015), coupled with the fact that in the social media era, products with high “appearance value” and clear cultural symbols are more conducive to sharing and social recognition. No contradictory or unsupported findings were identified for this dimension.

5.2.2 Care and Travel: Need for Both Functionality and Emotional Connection

Quantitative investigation revealed that the practical factor has a considerable impact, with “comfort design” and “travel friendliness” being crucial indicators. The high purchase rate of function-oriented products attests to the importance of Care and Travel: 63.87% chose “local speciality food” and 62.74% bought “accessories” (Table 4.5).

In addition to these quantitative findings, qualitative analysis demonstrated that tourists demand multi-scenario applicability. For example, one respondent noted, “Embroidered scarves keep warm when travelling and can be matched with clothes after returning home” (T14); a lightweight design is demanded. For example, another respondent noted, “Large handicrafts are inconvenient to carry, and eventually give up buying” (T24).

Designers balance cultural expression and tourism adaptability by using lightweight materials and multifunctional designs, directly influencing purchasing decisions.

5.2.3 Unique: Innovative Transformation of Regional Symbols

The quantitative study revealed that the unique feature had a slightly lower but substantial impact. The categories most concerned were “Identity mark” and “Natural

materials” (Tables 4.7 and 4.9). The need for local Unique demonstrated the value of Unique, with 63.87% of tourists purchasing “local speciality foods” (Table 4.5).

In addition to these quantitative findings, qualitative analysis demonstrated that tourists choose designs “unique to this place”. For example, one respondent noted, “I hope that traditional patterns are printed on the phone case, which is both local and practical” (T13). The innovative transformation cases mentioned in Chapter 2 also demonstrate the importance of Unique: the Palace Museum’s cultural and creative products have transformed palace elements into symbols of modern life, such as the “Palace Museum Lipstick” (Figure 2.22). Unique is achieved through symbolic innovation rather than simple replication (Wang, 2021; Kim & Littrell, 1999).

Figure 5.1 visualises the three-dimensional driver model, ranking design influences (aesthetic > care and travel > unique) and their mechanisms (visual appeal, functional adaptation, symbolic innovation). Aesthetic serves as the principal driving force, eliciting cultural identity through visual symbols; Care and Travel reduce the consumption threshold through functional and contextual adaptation; and Unique employs innovative transformation to fulfil personalised requirements.

The finding that Aesthetic design features are the strongest predictor of purchase intention directly aligns with Peirce’s semiotic theory. The souvenir’s design (the Representamen) must first successfully signify and evoke the desired cultural meaning (the Object) through its visual appeal, before a positive interpretation (the Interpretant) - purchase intention.

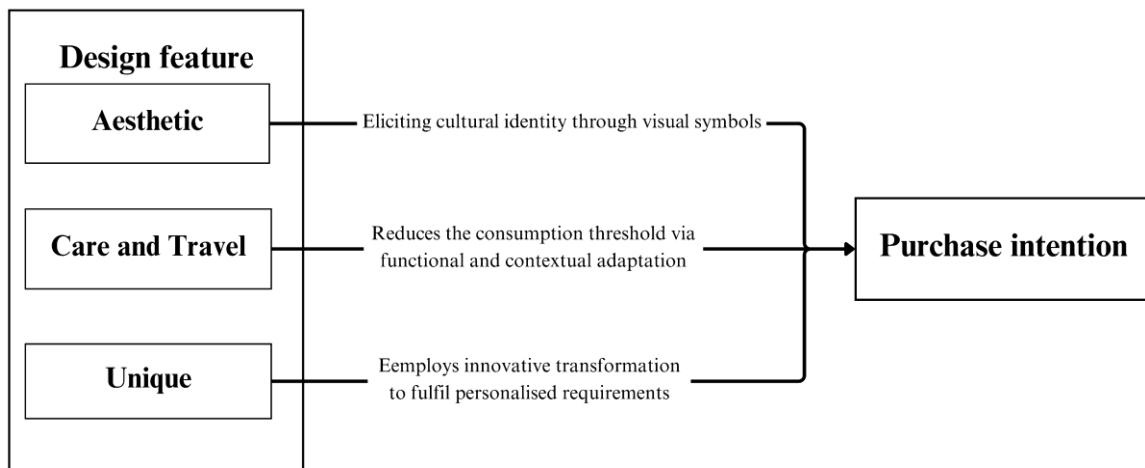


Figure 5.1: Design Feature Three-Dimensional Driving Model

The finding that the influence hierarchy is “Aesthetic > Care and Travel > Unique” refines and extends Kim & Littrell’s (1999) three-dimensional model of souvenir design. Previous studies have often treated design features as a holistic construct (Wang, 2023) or focused only on aesthetics and uniqueness (Sthapit & Björk, 2017), lacking empirical examination of the relative importance of each dimension in the context of cultural souvenirs for Chinese tourists. This study not only validates the applicability of the three dimensions in the Chinese context but also clarifies their differential impact mechanisms through quantitative path coefficients, directly addressing the research gap identified in the literature regarding “the lack of in-depth analysis of each design feature for cultural souvenirs”. This provides clear prioritisation guidance for the design of cultural souvenirs targeting the Chinese market.

5.3 The Relationship between Demographic Factors and Design Preferences

In response to Research Question Two, this section discusses the differentiated influence of demographic factors on design preferences and their moderating mechanisms, based on the framework in Figure 5.2. The core findings confirm that age, gender, income,

and education level significantly influence design preferences and positively moderate the relationship between design features and purchase intention.

Research Question 2: How do key demographic factors (age, gender, income, and education level) moderate the relationship between the design features of cultural souvenirs and purchase intention?

5.3.1 Gender: Dual Consumption Pathways in Instrumental Rationality vs. Experiential Orientation

Prior studies have demonstrated that gender significantly influences souvenir purchasing behaviour, revealing the following distinctions: female tourists tend to purchase souvenirs more frequently and at higher expenditures, favour emotion-driven acquisitions (such as gifts, collectibles, and local handicrafts), and assume greater social responsibilities for gift-giving (Lehto et al., 2004; Amaro et al., 2020). Their decisions are motivated by aesthetic qualities (such as design beauty) and emotional connections (such as travel memories) (Littrell et al., 1994; Xie & Bao, 2006). Male tourists prioritise functional rational attributes, including cultural significance, quality, and functional adaptability (Li, 2012; Combrink & Swanson, 2000), and they employ heuristic signals to facilitate decision-making (Verma, 2020).

This research, utilising quantitative method, identified that gender divergence is further manifested in the distinction between “instrumental rationality” and “experience-oriented” consumption pathways and elucidated the moderating influence of design intervention on gender preferences.

Quantitative analysis shows males exhibit a higher purchase frequency for non-designed items, prioritising functional designs, consistent with male “function-first” consumption patterns (Bem, 1981). However, under design features interventions, female purchase intention surpasses males, demonstrating greater aesthetic sensitivity. Qualitative data reveals gendered discourse. Females emphasise aesthetic details; for example, one respondent noted, “Embroidery colours must be vibrant with intricate patterns to warrant collection” (T12), and another respondent criticised, “Monotonous designs lack appeal” (T10). Males prioritise practical applications; for example, one respondent noted, “Souvenirs should serve outdoor purposes, like waterproof cultural badges” (T14).

The discovery of a higher baseline purchase frequency among males for non-designed items contrasts with the findings of Xie and Bao (2006) and Amaro et al. (2020), who generally reported higher souvenir engagement from females. This discrepancy highlights the importance of contextual and product-specific factors in moderating broad gender trends.

In summary, the two paths are:

Female tourists: “experience-oriented” path. A unique finding of this study is that male tourists reported a higher purchase frequency for non-designed items in generic scenarios. This appears to contradict some literature positioning women as the primary souvenir purchasers (Xie & Bao, 2006). A plausible explanation is that women have a higher threshold for design quality; mediocre design inhibits their purchase motivation, whereas men, due to a functional orientation, exhibit greater tolerance for basic design. This, in turn, underscores the critical influence of design on female consumers.

Male tourists: “instrumental rationality” path. This research innovatively found that men’s perception of “authenticity” is more dependent on external clues (such as official certification logos) rather than design details, which provides new directions for precision marketing (such as strengthening functional attribute labels).

This differentiation reflects societal role expectations (Bem, 1981):

- Female experiential orientation: Aesthetic value & emotional resonance.
- Male instrumental rationality: Practical functionality.

5.3.2 Age: Generational Differentiation in Cultural Cognition and Technological Adaptability

Prior studies (Chapter 2.5.3.2) indicate that age significantly influences souvenir purchasing preferences and motivations, revealing the following distinctions: younger tourists favour exotic experiences and practical items (e.g., T-shirts and sweatshirts), seek novelty and social characteristics (Kim & Littrell, 2001; Lehto et al., 2004), show more impulsive purchasing behaviour, and regard souvenirs as symbolic representations of their travel experiences. Middle-aged tourists prioritise cultural significance and handicraft quality, often opting for premium crafts (Qi & Luo, 2005; Littrell et al., 1994) and value souvenirs’ long-term utility and cultural representation (Li, 2012). Senior tourists prioritise mobility and emotional resonance by favouring items that stimulate vacation memories, emphasise practicality, and highlight the symbolic significance of sites (Li, 2012; Mimbs et al., 2020). They exhibit greater caution in purchase selections, motivated by functional requirements (Littrell et al., 1993). This research revealed that age delineates

intergenerational cognitive disparities and further divides purchase behaviour through the moderating influence of design attributes and the dynamics of consumption contexts.

Quantitative analysis shows that age positively correlates with design sensitivity - older cohorts show a stronger preference for design features. Middle-aged respondents prioritise traditional craftsmanship and cultural authenticity; younger groups focus on tech integration and “social currency” value (Belk, 1988); elderly cohorts emphasise portability. According to qualitative analysis, young tourists expressed innovative demands; for example, one respondent noted, “Using AR scanning to show the stories of cultural relics” (T22); middle-aged tourists emphasised the historical continuity of craftsmanship; for example, one respondent noted, “Machine embroidery lacks the warmth of handmade work” (T12); and elderly tourists preferred functional designs. For example, one respondent noted, “Folding fans are light and practical” (T14).

In summary, the generational cognitive differences are as follows:

The young group is “driven by technology integration”. This group seeks to amalgamate technology and culture (including AR interaction and digital derivatives), aligning with the “exotic experience preference” identified in existing literature, while transcending the constraints of conventional categories (e.g., transitioning from T-shirts to innovative cultural creations). This research demonstrates that the younger demographic shows increased impulse purchasing driven by social demands (e.g., social media sharing), with their decisions being substantially influenced by the “social attributes of design” (e.g., customisable labels, collaborative intellectual property).

The middle-aged group is “anchored by the authenticity of traditional craftsmanship”. For this group, the authenticity of traditional craftsmanship has emerged

as the primary purchasing motivator (e.g., manual details), aligning with the “cultural connotation preference” identified in the literature. However, This research suggests that the middle-aged cohort exhibits heightened sensitivity to design authenticity, indicating a greater likelihood of forgoing purchases due to craftsmanship imperfections. This research also found that middle-aged people are much less likely to buy items if there is not a clear cultural story behind them, which means it is important to highlight cultural symbols like historical labels to encourage their interest.

The elderly group is “portability first”. Portability transcends ordinary practicality and emerges as a fundamental factor for older tourists, encompassing aspects such as lightweight packaging and convenient storage design, thereby augmenting the singular notion of “emotional connection” in the literature. This research suggests that older people’s view of “cultural authenticity” is mainly shaped by simple visual signs, like traditional patterns, instead of complex stories, providing a new viewpoint for designs that are friendly to their needs.

Age mediates preferences through cultural identity depth and tech adaptability, forming a generational spectrum:

- Traditional custodians (middle-aged): Cultural purity
- Digital natives (youth): Interactive cultural expressions
- Practicalists (elderly): Functional convenience

5.3.3 Income: Tension between Symbolic Consumption and Basic Needs

Prior studies (Chapter 2.5.3.3) indicate that income levels markedly influence souvenir purchasing behaviour, revealing the following distinctions: affluent consumers favour high-quality, valuable, and artistic souvenirs and emphasise conspicuous consumption and cultural symbolism (Qi & Luo, 2005; Jang et al., 2004), and their purchasing choices are motivated by aesthetic qualities (e.g., design elegance) and trust perceptions (Durmaz & Gündüz, 2021). The middle-income demographic seeks a balance between practicality and cultural significance, often selecting souvenirs with great cost-effectiveness and artistic merit (Qi & Luo, 2005). Low-income demographics emphasise price sensitivity and practicality, exhibit more prudent purchasing behaviours, and are inclined to forgo non-essential items due to cost considerations (Cakir et al., 2010; Durmaz & Gündüz, 2021).

Through mixed research, this research found that income levels have considerable stratification effects on consumption behaviour and design preferences for cultural souvenirs.

Quantitative analysis revealed that income level considerably increases the impact of design aspects on purchase intention, with higher-income tourists being more sensitive to design features. High-income groups are willing to pay a premium for Unique, preferring high-end materials and limited designs; low-income groups are price sensitive and will avoid purchasing owing to high pricing; and middle-income groups tend to compromise and seek a “culture-practical” balance.

Qualitative analysis revealed that high-income tourists, for example, one respondent noted, “Want to use better materials” (T21). In contrast, for low-income tourists, another respondent noted, “Do not buy because the price is too high” (T15).

In summary, the attributes of consumption stratification are as follows:

High-income groups: Unique premium payment. The desire to stand out and a preference for high-quality materials greatly affect what high-income people buy (like limited edition cultural crafts or precious metal items), which connects to the idea of “conspicuous consumption” found in previous studies. However, this research suggests for the first time that their willingness to spend money is strongly tied to symbolic value (like cultural identity labels). It showed that wealthy individuals care more about “implicit cultural capital” (such as famous signatures and custom diplomas) than just the price, providing a new way to target the high-end market. However, this research proposes for the first time that symbolic value, such as cultural identity labels, closely influences their willingness to pay. This research revealed that affluent individuals exhibit greater sensitivity to “implicit cultural capital” (such as master signatures and bespoke diplomas) than mere price tags, offering a novel perspective for high-end market positioning.

Middle-income groups: culture-practical balance hub. Pursuing an optimal balance between cultural attributes and functionality, exemplified by multifunctional cultural and creative products and light luxury design, constitutes the predominant factor, addressing the descriptive void regarding the ambiguous behaviours of the middle-income demographic in existing literature. This research suggests that middle-income consumers are the primary group affected by “cultural consumption sinking.” Their buying choices are

strongly shaped by how products are designed for specific situations (like holiday gift boxes or activities for parents and children), rather than just by price or cultural stories.

Low-income groups: price rigidity constraint. Price sensitivity mainly influences decision-making; however, cultural identification can mitigate price resistance to some extent, exemplified by affordable intangible cultural heritage experience packages and micro-culture inventions, thereby augmenting the predominant “practicality first” approach discussed in the literature. This research shows that low-income communities can sometimes get around price limits for things like emotional gifts and cultural or educational needs. However, they need strong designs that connect with their culture, like using local symbols.

The tension between symbolic consumption and basic needs observed across income tiers resonates with Bourdieu’s (1984) theory of distinction, where economic capital translates into cultural capital through consumption choices, a dynamic also noted in the work of Jang et al. (2004) in a luxury tourism context:

- High-income groups create cultural symbols
- Low-income groups prioritise basic requirements
- Middle-income groups balance culture and practicality

5.3.4 Education: Stratification of Cultural Capital and Appreciation Capacity

Previous studies indicate that educational attainment substantially influences souvenir purchasing preferences and decision-making processes: individuals with lower education levels emphasise cost-effectiveness and aesthetic appeal, relying more on simplified indicators (e.g., packaging design) (He, 2012; Samuel et al., 2011). They are less

aware of cultural significance and are inclined to select products with explicit functionalities (Li, 2021). The secondary education demographic (college/bachelor's degree) focuses on the craftsmanship details and cultural symbols of souvenirs (including traditional skills and brand endorsement), constituting the primary consumer group for specialised handicrafts (He, 2012; Kay Smith et al., 2022) and striving for a balance among price, quality, and cultural attributes (Li, 2021). The higher education group prioritises the cultural narrative and historical origins of the brand, perceives souvenirs as vessels of “cultural capital” (He, 2012; Kay Smith et al., 2022), and imposes stringent criteria for product authenticity, including intangible cultural heritage certification and craft transparency (Samuel et al., 2011).

This research also discovered through quantitative method research that education level had a substantial “cultural cognition–functional demand” stratification influence on consumer behaviour and design preference for cultural souvenirs. Quantitative analysis discovered that the highly educated group has strict requirements for authenticity, pays attention to the traceability of craftsmanship, and pays more attention to the quality and authenticity of souvenirs (Samuel et al., 2011). The low-educated group relies on price to judge authenticity and prefers intuitive design. The college/undergraduate group is the core audience of innovative design and attaches significantly more importance to design features. Qualitative investigation revealed that highly educated tourists value “showing the production process” (T24). In contrast, low-educated tourists “buy directly at the exit of the scenic spot” (T23) and are unconcerned about the source.

In summary, the impact of educational stratification is seen in the following dimensions:

Low-education groups: simplified decision path. Prior research findings indicate that cost and aesthetics primarily influence this group. The study revealed that individuals with lower educational attainment may enhance their focus on cultural elements in prominent cultural contexts (e.g., guided tours and descriptions of attractions). However, they must depend on visual narrative design (e.g., iconographic historical accounts).

Secondary education groups: innovation design hub. This demographic is particularly receptive to new designs, including cross-border partnerships and digital cultural creation, and therefore serves as the primary catalyst for market dynamics. This research posits that the secondary education demographic constitutes the primary audience for “cultural souvenirs”, with their purchasing behaviour being substantially influenced by design innovation rather than conventional brands. The acceptance of products combining “intangible cultural heritage and technology” is the highest. It addresses the deficiency in the characterisation of the behavioural potential of the secondary education cohort in prior research.

Higher education groups: explicit cultural capital. The primary requirements of this group are craft traceability and cultural connotation, with their perceived authenticity score markedly exceeding that of other groups. This aligns with the concept of “brand preference” in existing literature, yet transcends mere brand value by highlighting the accumulation of cultural capital, notably the strong correlation between purchasing behaviour and the formation of personal cultural identity. This research demonstrates the importance of “implicit knowledge transfer” throughout higher education sectors and offers a comprehensive cultural empowerment design strategy for the premium market.

Education increases critical appreciation by building cultural capital:

- High-education: Evaluates the design connotation
- Low-education: Relies on external clues to simplify decision-making
- Mid-education: Becomes the core audience of innovative design

In summary, this research builds upon the vague description of the relationship between the demographic characteristics of Chinese tourists and the choice of cultural souvenirs in the existing literature. By constructing a “theoretical framework of the relationship between demographic data and design preferences” (Figure 5.2), it reveals that “gender differentiation functions and aesthetic orientation; age defines the boundary between traditional protection and technological integration; income defines the threshold of symbolic consumption and basic needs; education constructs a ladder of appreciation driven by cultural capital”.

The “theoretical framework of the relationship between demographic factors and design preferences” (Figure 5.2) constructed in this study systematically integrates and expands upon previous fragmented research on the influence of demographic variables (e.g., Anderson & Littrell, 1995; Li, 2012). While existing literature notes the influence of factors such as age and gender, there is a lack of systematic integration within the context of Chinese cultural souvenir consumption, and even less exploration of how these factors moderate the influence of design features on purchase intention. Through hierarchical regression analysis, this study is the first to simultaneously verify the existence and direction of the quadruple moderating effects of age, gender, income, and education within a sample of Chinese tourists, thereby addressing the gap in the literature concerning “limited attention to the moderating

effects of demographic variables”. This framework reveals the heterogeneous consumption logic within tourist groups, providing a theoretical basis for refined market segmentation and marketing.

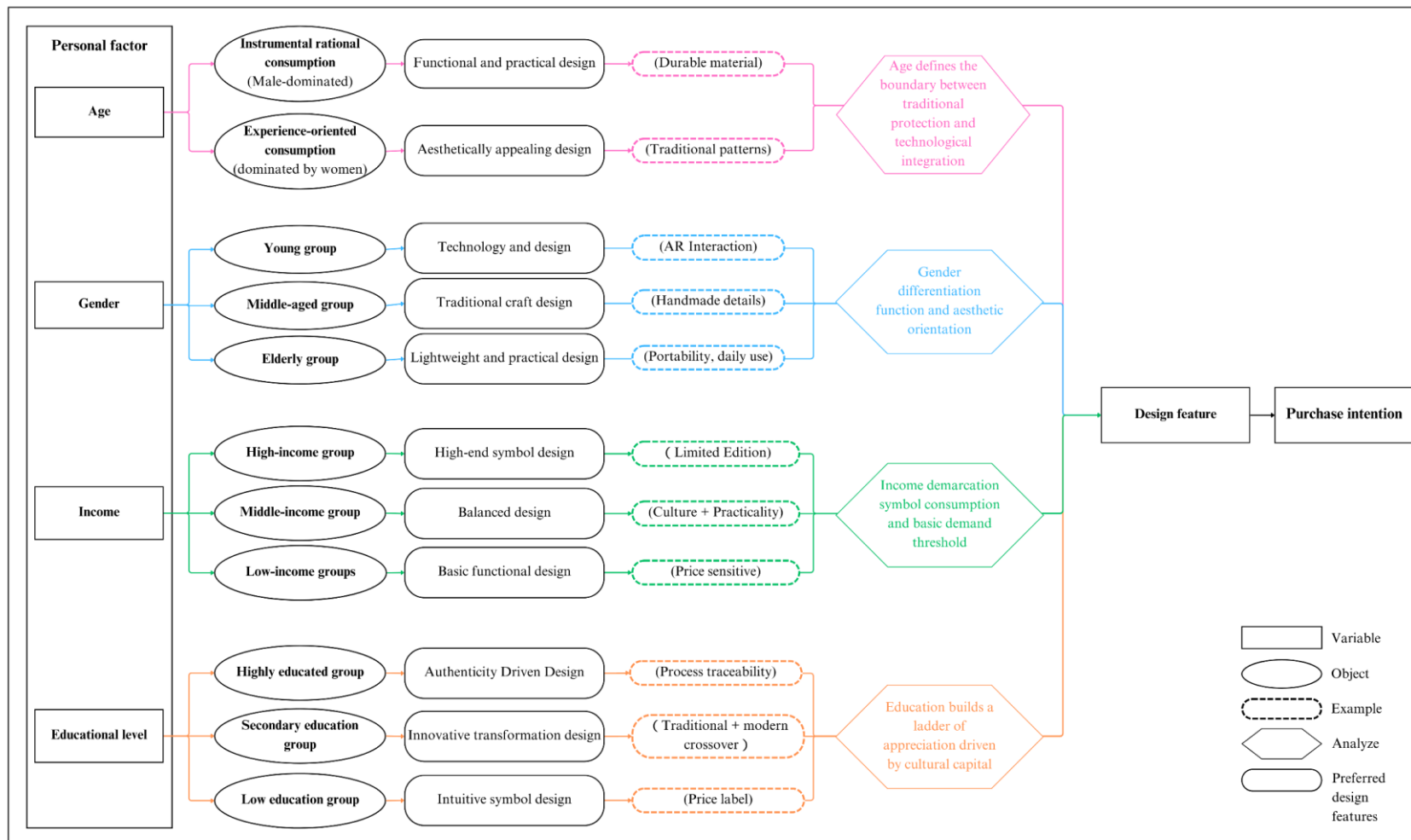


Figure 5.2: Theoretical Framework of the Relationship between Demographic Data and Design Preferences

5.4 Evaluate the Impact of Perceived Authenticity on Purchasing Decisions

Addressing Research Question Three, this section validates the multidimensional mediating mechanism of perceived authenticity in the “design features → purchase decision” pathway. The core findings are that design features exert both a direct effect on purchase intention and indirect effects through the three authenticity dimensions: Authenticity Cognition (ACCS), Purchase Behaviour and Authenticity (PBA), and Attitudes Towards Imitations (ATI). This confirms perceived authenticity as a pivotal mediating bridge.

Research Question 3: Does perceived authenticity mediate the relationship between the design features of cultural souvenirs and tourists’ purchase intention?

Three-dimensional intermediary path:

SEM and bootstrap tests reveal that design elements can directly influence tourists’ purchasing intentions while indirectly driving purchase decisions via the three dimensions of perceived authenticity.

- **Path 1 ACCS:** Design features indirectly increase purchase intention by raising tourists’ understanding of the cultural authenticity of products.
- **Path 2 PBA:** The impact of the connection between actual purchasing behaviour and perceived authenticity strongly drives repurchase or recommendation intent.
- **Path 3 ATI:** Design features indirectly promote the purchase of authentic souvenirs by reducing the acceptance of imitations.

The impact’s strength is “PBA > ATI > ACCS”. Several tourists stated in open-ended questions that “designing souvenirs in collaboration with local artists will make them more

attractive” (T21). The strength of the PBA path (strongest indirect effect) suggests that the concrete association between the act of purchasing and authenticity perception is a powerful driver for repurchase or recommendation. The ACCS path highlights the cognitive route where design enhances cultural appreciation. The ATI path underscores how good design can fortify the symbolic boundary between authentic and inauthentic goods, steering consumers towards genuine products.

The mediating role of perceived authenticity bridges the semiotic interpretation of design and the TPB decision-making process. A souvenir’s design, when interpreted as authentic, directly shapes the tourist's attitude towards the purchase (e.g., this is a genuine cultural product). It also influences subjective norms (e.g., this would be appreciated as a thoughtful, authentic gift) and perceived Behavioural control (e.g., this is a worthwhile investment), thereby collectively driving Behavioural intention.

Through structural equation modelling and Bootstrap testing, this study fully elucidates the multiple chain-mediating role of perceived authenticity in the “design features → purchase decision” pathway. This strongly supports and deepens the preliminary finding by Guo and Zhu (2023) on the mediating role of perceived authenticity in ICH souvenir purchases. Previous research has often treated authenticity as a unidimensional construct or a moderating variable (Chhabra et al., 2003; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010), lacking empirical examination of its role as a multidimensional mediating mechanism, particularly as a key bridge connecting “design features” and “purchase intention”. This study operationalises authenticity into the three dimensions of “cognition – behaviour – attitude” and quantifies their specific mediating effect sizes, directly filling the knowledge gap regarding “how perceived authenticity influences Chinese tourists’ purchase decisions”. It confirms the core

logic that “design value needs to be translated into consumption intention effectively through the perception of authenticity”.

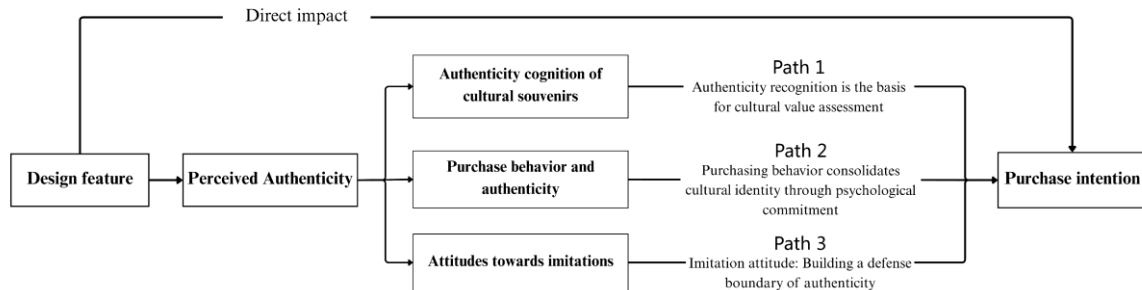


Figure 5.3: Mediating Paths of Perceived Authenticity

Group Heterogeneity:

This research indicated no significant difference in perceived authenticity among Chinese tourists based on gender (male or female). However, there was a significant difference based on age.

Age groups differed in their sensitivity to cultural connotations, with the middle-aged group (post-80s) having the highest standards for recognising the authenticity of cultural souvenirs.

Income and education level may also impact perceived authenticity. The high-income group (>12,000 yuan) was more inclined to pay a premium for “authenticity certification”. In contrast, the highly educated group (a master’s degree and above) was more concerned with craft traceability and less likely to accept imitations.

In summary, perceived authenticity mediates the impact of design features via the “cognition–behaviour–attitude” triple path, with its effect moderated by age, income, and education level.

5.5 Other Influencing Factors

This research examines Chinese tourists' travel patterns, purchasing scene preferences, and souvenir type choices (Chapter 4.2.3). The specific results are as follows:

In terms of demographic characteristics, tourists aged 18–25 and 50–55 make up the most significant proportion, with more men than women; the largest group has a monthly income of 3,501–4,000 yuan, a high proportion of undergraduate/college education, and primarily civil servants/state-owned enterprise employees. This analysis demonstrates that the primary purchasers of cultural souvenirs are young and middle-aged men with a solid economic base and education level (see Chapter 4.2.2 for details).

Travel motives are primarily leisure and relaxation, followed by social demands, indicating that souvenirs serve personal and social media purposes (see Chapter 4.2.3.1 for details). The purchasing locations are concentrated in tourist shops, local markets, museums, and cultural centres, emphasising the need for sales channel diversification and cultural tourism (see Chapter 4.2.3.2 for details).

Local speciality foods are the most popular purchase category, agreeing with du Cros' (2013) findings; accessories, artworks, and toys come in second, demonstrating tourists' desire for local cultural icons (see Chapter 4.2.3.3 for details).

Natural materials (wood, metal, and fabric) are popular among tourists, indicating their concerns with environmental conservation and sustainability.

Based on the previous analysis, this research can reasonably summarise the findings:

First, tourism drives differentiation of souvenir types. The leisure and relaxation group prefers local speciality foods and lightweight decorations, emphasising the portability and emotional connection of souvenirs; the social needs group tends to buy artworks/paintings and co-branded trendy toys, focusing on the social currency attributes of souvenirs; and the cultural exploration group chooses intangible cultural heritage handicrafts and book/document replicas.

Next is the value stratification impact of purchasing scenarios. Tourist stores in high-frequency settings entice tourists to buy standardised products (such as key rings and postcards) for ease but report lower satisfaction due to generic designs, indicating an issue with design uniformity. The local market draws price-conscious tourists, but they have serious concerns about product quality. Museums/culture centres attract highly educated groups, whose purchasing behaviour is strongly influenced by authenticity and who favour high-end cultural and creative products. Young tourists prefer online platforms, which encourage consumption of “Internet celebrity products” via social media and have a high repurchase rate.

Finally, intergenerational conflict between materials and functions. Despite their preference for natural materials like wood and ceramics, middle-aged and older adults find them limited in weight and price. The younger demographic accepts 3D printing and environmentally friendly materials.

In summary, the findings obtained demonstrate that the design and marketing of cultural souvenirs must closely align with the functional stratification of consumption scenarios as well as the population’s symbolic requirements.

5.6 Conceptual Model and Application of Theoretical Framework

This research developed a theoretical framework based on the Peirce semiotic triad model (Symbol–Object–Interpretant) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Figure 2.6) and empirically validated the decision path “Personal factor - Design feature - Perceived authenticity – Purchase intention” (Figure 5.4).

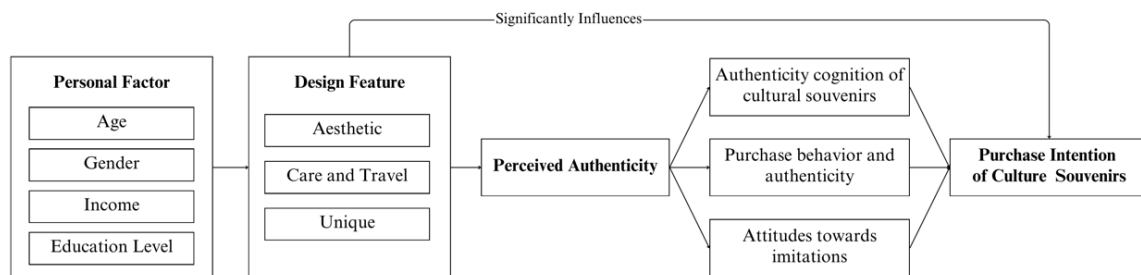


Figure 5.4: Conceptual Model

The following is how the theoretical framework explains the core mechanism of the conceptual model through the merging of semiotics and TPB:

Semiotic Perspective: Design elements as a decoding medium for cultural symbols. The ternary relationship in Peirce’s semiotics gives a profound theoretical underpinning for the mechanism of design features.

Symbols (Design Features): The three dimensions of cultural souvenirs - “Aesthetic, Care and Travel, Unique” - serve as modern codes for cultural symbols. For example, classic ceramic designs (aesthetics), lightweight materials (functional adaptation), and Forbidden City lipstick (symbolic invention) all communicate cultural value through vision, function, and innovation.

Objects (Cultural Authenticity): Design features that highlight cultural implications (such as regional identity) directly impact tourists' perceptions of authenticity. The study discovered that aesthetic elements elicit cultural identification through visual symbols (H1b), care and travel lower the consumption threshold through scene adaptation (H1a), and symbolic innovation meets personal demands through Unique (H1c). The three factors influence tourists' perceptions of cultural authenticity.

Explanation (Emotion and Cultural Identity): Tourists' perceptions of design features are mirrored in their emotional value evaluation (such as social requirements) and cultural belonging. For example, women's sensitivity to aesthetics indicates emotional orientation in symbol decoding, whereas the middle-aged group's desire for traditional craftsmanship originates from cultural identity distinctions in symbolic interpretation.

TPB perspective: normative control and behavioural management of demographic factors. The TPB framework (attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control) describes how demographic characteristics influence the impact of design features.

Attitude (Emotional Value Assessment): Design features drive emotional value (e.g., social currency demand) through aesthetic and symbolic innovation, resulting in direct purchase intention. Demographic characteristics influence the degree of attitude formation via group heterogeneity (for example, gender differences in aesthetic sensibility).

Subjective norms (social expectations): Differences in gender and education level (H2b, H2d) indicate how social roles and cultural capital influence consumption norms. For example, women's concentration on aesthetics aligns with society's expectations on the role of "aesthetic expressers" (Bem, 1981).

Perceived behavioural control (resource and skill adaptation): income and age variables (H2c, H2a) influence design acceptance via economic capacity (payment premium) and technical adaptability (digital native demands). For example, high-income groups' willingness to pay a premium for distinctiveness shows TPB's control over "resources and capabilities" that influence behavioural feasibility.

In summary, by combining semiotics and TPB, this research reveals the theoretical logic of the decision path. Symbolic expression influences the perception of authenticity, while design features convey cultural meanings through symbolic encoding, trigger tourists' understanding of cultural authenticity, and enhance purchase intention through emotional identification. Demographics impact the interpretation of symbols. For instance, younger tourists (digital natives) decode AR-enabled designs more readily than older cohorts, who prefer tactile craftsmanship (see T12, T22). While attitudes, norms, and control variables in the TPB framework influence symbol decoding intensity and direction via group heterogeneity (gender, age, income, and education).

5.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter investigated the core driving mechanism of Chinese tourists' cultural souvenir purchasing decisions using a mixed research method, conducting theoretical construction and empirical testing around the three dimensions of design characteristics, demographic variables, and perceived authenticity, and reaching the following conclusions:

First, in response to research question 1 (design features), this research identified a three-level hierarchy (aesthetic > care and travel > unique). The design features present a three-dimensional driving concept known as "visual attraction-functional adaptation-symbol

innovation.”. Aesthetic value (Aesthetic) serves as the primary driving force by leveraging the cultural identity of visual symbols. Meanwhile, functional adaptability (Care and Travel) lowers the consumption barrier, and Unique (Unique) relies on innovative transformation to meet personalised demands. The three priorities indicate that the design of cultural souvenirs should prioritise visual performance while also considering practicality and symbol originality.

Second, regarding research question 2 (demographic characteristics), This research revealed gender/age/income/education stratification (see Figure 5.2). Demographic characteristics alter design preferences using a fourfold logic. Gender differentiates between “instrumental rationality” and “experience-orientated” consumption paths (women focus on aesthetics, men focus on functionality); age defines intergenerational cognitive differences (middle-aged people stick to tradition, young people search for technological integration, and the elderly focus on practicality); income defines the boundaries of symbolic consumption (high income is a Unique premium, low income is subject to price constraints); and education. The four-axis mechanism provides a theoretical framework for market segmentation.

Finally, for research question 3 (perceived authenticity), This research verified its triple mediation path (PBA > ATI > ACCS). Perceived authenticity modulates the influence of design characteristics via the triple channel of “cognition-Behaviour-attitude.” Cultural authenticity cognition (ACCS), purchase behaviour association (PBA), and rejection of imitations (ATI) all contribute to the mediating impact (47.3% of the overall effect), with age, income, and educational level moderating the effect’s severity. This

discovery confirms that authenticity is a psychological anchor for cultural consumption and a critical hub for the evolution of design values.

In addition, consuming scenarios and behavioural patterns (examples include high-value consumption at museums and online social networking) impact purchasing decisions to some extent, and conversion efficiency must be increased through a scenario adaptation design.

The theoretical framework created in This research (Figure 5.4) looks at purchase decisions in a more complex manner by considering how design features, different group characteristics, and understanding of authenticity interact. These discussions not only address the research questions posed by This research but also provide nuanced, segment-specific theoretical guidance for the design and marketing of cultural souvenirs.

However, this research has certain limitations, particularly regarding the breadth of the sampling approach and the absence of longitudinal data. Future studies could explore the applicability of these findings in different cultural contexts, employ longitudinal designs to examine the dynamics of consumer behaviour, or investigate emerging forms such as digital souvenirs. These findings and reflections establish the foundation for the final conclusions. The next chapter will provide an overall summary, elaborating on the theoretical contributions, practical implications, research limitations, and future directions.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

6.1 Introduction

Building upon the empirical examination in Chapter 4 and the in-depth discussion in Chapter 5, this research has comprehensively elucidated the key factors influencing Chinese tourists' decisions to purchase cultural souvenirs, along with their underlying mechanisms. As the culminating chapter of this thesis, this section aims to synthesise and elevate the preceding research.

Cultural souvenirs are a significant conduit linking travel experiences with cultural assets, holding a vital role in China's cultural tourism sector. Statistics indicate that China's domestic tourism market have experienced significant development post-recovery in 2023, with an anticipated 4.89 billion domestic tourists and tourism income surpassing 5.2 trillion yuan (MCT, 2024), with cultural souvenir consumption emerging as a crucial growth factor. The Palace Museum's cultural and creative goods sales revenue surpassed 1.5 billion yuan in 2017 (People's Daily Online, 2019), demonstrating the substantial financial potential of cultural souvenirs.

Nonetheless, despite the substantial market size, the business encounters significant challenges, devoid of cultural depth and design originality, leading to 68% of Chinese tourists declining to purchase such items (Li et al., 2016). Existing research primarily examines tourists' purchasing behaviour and intentions (Amaro et al., 2020), yet seldom investigates the influence of design attributes (such as aesthetics, Unique, care and travel)

on purchasing decisions, particularly the absence of empirical analysis regarding the preferences of Chinese tourists.

This research deficiency constrains innovation and competition within the souvenir sector and obstructs the contemporary evolution of cultural heritage. This research demonstrates how design features, demographic factors, and perceived authenticity work together, providing a framework and practical methods for making culturally meaningful souvenirs and appealing in the market, which helps the industry tackle the issue of sameness and supports the ongoing growth of cultural tourism and the protection of intangible cultural heritage.

This concluding chapter synthesizes the key findings presented in Chapter 4 and discussed in Chapter 5, moving beyond a mere summary to elucidate their collective theoretical significance and practical implications. The following sections not only reiterate the answers to the research questions but also interpret what these answers mean for theory development and for the stakeholders involved in the cultural souvenir industry.

6.2 Conclusion

This research focuses on “The determinants of cultural souvenir design purchases by Chinese tourists”. It employs a hybrid research method (quantitative and qualitative analysis) to investigate the influencing mechanisms of design features, demographic variables, and perceived authenticity on purchasing decisions. The primary research contents completed are as follows:

(1) In response to research question 1, This research proposes a three-dimensional driving theoretical model (Figure 5.1) of “Visual attraction–Functional adaptation–Symbolic

innovation” for the design features of cultural souvenirs, verifying its priority impact on the purchase intention of Chinese tourists (Aesthetic $\beta=0.63 >$ Care and Travel $\beta=0.619 >$ Unique $\beta=0.499$).

(2) In response to research question 2, This research revealed the differential effect paths of demographic characteristics on design preferences (gender $\beta=0.249 >$ income $\beta=0.202 >$ age $\beta=0.167 >$ education $\beta=0.150$) and constructed a four-axis explanatory framework of “Social role expectations–Intergenerational cultural cognition–Economic capital–Cultural capital” (see Figure 5.2).

(3) In response to research question 3, this research proposes a “cognition–behaviour–attitude” triple path model of perceived authenticity (Figure 5.3), illustrating its complete mediating effect between design features and purchase decisions (purchase behaviour and authenticity $IE=0.182 >$ attitude towards imitations $IE=0.091 >$ authenticity cognition $IE=0.062$).

Based on the empirical findings, the initial conceptual framework (Figure 2.28) is substantiated and can be verbally elaborated into a revised model. The core relationship from “Design Features” to “Purchase Intention” is confirmed, with the three dimensions now empirically ranked in influence (Aesthetic $>$ Care and Travel $>$ Unique). Critically, the mediating role of “Perceived Authenticity” is fully supported, with its three facets “Authenticity Cognition”, “Purchase Behaviour & Authenticity”, and “Attitudes Towards Imitations” - forming distinct and significant mediating pathways. Furthermore, all hypothesized moderating effects of demographic factors (age, gender, income, education) are validated, indicating that the strength of the “Design \rightarrow Purchase Intention” link is contingent upon these tourist characteristics. Therefore, the final model presents a more

complex and contingent network of relationships than initially proposed, depicting a direct effect of design, three specific indirect effects via authenticity, and four moderating effects, collectively offering a comprehensive map of Chinese tourists' decision-making mechanics for cultural souvenirs.

This research makes several key contributions to theory. Firstly, it successfully integrates Peirce's semiotics with the TPB, demonstrating that the process of symbolic interpretation (from representamen to interpretant) is a crucial precursor that feeds into the attitudinal, normative, and control beliefs of the TPB. Secondly, it refines the TPB in a cultural consumption context by identifying 'Perceived Authenticity' not merely as an external variable, but as a central, multi-dimensional mediating construct that channels the influence of product design (a key stimulus) into the decision-making framework. Thirdly, it specifies the semiotic process for cultural souvenirs, showing that "Aesthetic" representation is the primary gateway to cultural meaning-making for tourists. This model thus provides a more nuanced, culturally-grounded framework for understanding tourist consumption Behaviour, particularly in Asian contexts where the authenticity of cultural symbols carries significant weight (MacCannell, 1973; Littrell et al., 1994; Guo & Zhu, 2023).

Collectively, these findings on design features provide a validated, hierarchical framework for designers and marketers, prioritizing "Aesthetics" as the primary attractor while underscoring that functionality (Care and Travel) is a non-negotiable baseline. Theoretically, this hierarchy enriches our understanding of how semiotic value is processed by consumers, with visual appeal serving as the critical first step in the interpretation of cultural symbols. Through an in-depth discussion of the results obtained, four application

strategies are proposed, namely design innovation, market segmentation, authenticity management, and policy coordination (see Figure 6.2), to provide an operational guide for the industry.

6.3 Summary of Findings

This research uses Chinese tourists as its research subjects, focusing on the influencing mechanism of cultural souvenir purchases. Semiotic and TPB theories combine to create a multidimensional theoretical framework of “personal factor–design feature–perceived authenticity–purchase intention”. To systematically investigate the role of design features, demographic factors, and perceived authenticity in purchase decisions, a mixed research method (quantitative as the primary, qualitative as an auxiliary) is used, along with statistical methods such as SEM, ANOVA, qualitative thematic analysis, and so on. The primary research findings are the following:

First, the primary driving impact of design elements on purchase intention was identified, and a three-dimensional driving model of design features on purchase intention was developed. This research validated the three-dimensional driving concept of “visual attraction (Aesthetic)–functional adaptation (Care and Travel)–symbol innovation (Unique)”. Aesthetic value becomes the primary driving force through the cultural identity of visual symbols ($\beta=0.635$). Functional adaptation reduces the consumption threshold through scene compatibility ($\beta=0.619$). Unique relies on innovation transformation to meet personalised needs ($\beta=0.499$). The three priorities (Aesthetic > Care and Travel > Unique) indicate that cultural souvenir design should prioritise visual performance while balancing practicality and innovation.

Furthermore, demographic variables systematically regulate the action path of design features and purchase decision-making patterns via the four-part mechanism of “Social role expectations (gender)–Intergenerational cultural cognition (age)–Economic capital stratification (income)–Cultural capital accumulation (education)”. Policymakers and businesses must create stratification techniques that consider group heterogeneity to maximise market efficiency. The specific results are as follows:

Gender differences in “instrumental rationality” and “experience-orientated” consumption patterns. Female tourists are sensitive to beauty and originality, whereas male tourists prioritise functional flexibility. This aligns with other research findings (Littrell et al., 1994), indicating that female tourists exhibit more visual design sensitivity than their male counterparts. This research further elaborated on its purchasing scenarios. Without design intervention, male tourists have a greater purchase frequency; nevertheless, superior design can markedly enhance female tourists’ propensity to spend.

This research further contextualises this finding, revealing that while male tourists may purchase more frequently in the absence of strong design, superior design significantly elevates purchase intention among female tourists.

Cognitive differences among generations are defined by age. Younger tourists (“digital natives”) are driven by technological integration and social currency; middle-aged groups (“traditional custodians”) are anchored by the authenticity of traditional craftsmanship; older tourists (“practicalists”) prioritise portability and functional convenience. These differences delineate intergenerational cognitive disparities (see Figure 5.2).

Income determines the boundaries of symbolic consumption. High-income groups are more willing to pay a premium for Unique and prefer high-end materials; low-income groups are price-constrained and will choose to forego high-priced souvenirs; high-income groups are significantly more willing to buy than low-income groups, but middle-income groups make up the most significant proportion of the “culture–practical” balance.

Education level creates cultural capital stratification. Highly educated groups prioritise craft traceability and cultural connotations, and their perceived authenticity scores are significantly higher than those of less educated groups. Less educated groups rely on price and appearance to simplify decisions; and middle- and highly educated groups are most sensitive to innovative designs and are the primary drivers of the cultural souvenir market.

The research findings give empirical support for market segmentation and precision marketing. Figure 6.1 depicts the differential influence of demographic variables in detail.

	Key Finding	Demographic characteristics significantly influence Chinese tourists' design feature preferences (Influence level: Gender > Income > Age > Education)		
Descriptive statistical analysis	Chinese tourists	The overall satisfaction with design features is medium . People are more interested with the "identity identification" aspect of cultural souvenirs. Table 4.9		It is generally believed that cultural souvenirs have a high degree of authenticity . Cultural souvenirs effectively meet tourists' perceived needs for local cultural value through authenticity design. Table 4.10
		The willingness to purchase lacks a strong tendency . The willingness to purchase culturally relevant and local specialty souvenirs is slightly stronger . Table 4.10		
Correlation analysis-Table 4.24		Design Features	Perceived Authenticity	Purchase Intention
ANOVA SEM Hierarchical Regression Analysis (HRA) Thematic Analysis	Gender	<p>More sensitive to aesthetics/uniqueness</p> <p>Focus on functionality</p> <p>Experience-oriented consumption > Instrumental/rational consumption</p> <p>Gender has a significant impact on design preferences Table 4.20-SEM-H20</p> <p>Female tourists are more sensitive to design features Table 4.33-HRA</p>	<p>There is no significant gender difference in perception authenticity Table 4.18-t-test</p>	<p>No design feature intervention men are more willing to buy</p> <p>Driven by design features women are more willing to buy</p> <p>Table 4.19-t-test</p> <p>Table 4.21-HRA</p> <p>Gender is a key factor affecting purchasing intentions Gender has a dual-path effect on cultural souvenir consumption (t-test & SEM)</p>
	Age	<p>Craftsmanship/ Cultural features</p> <p>Technological elements/ Social attributes</p> <p>Functional (pay least attention to design features)</p> <p>Post-90s > Post-90s/Generation Z > Retired people</p> <p>The older one gets, the stronger preference for design features becomes Table 4.30-SEM-H20</p> <p>Middle-aged group pay the most attention to design features Table 4.19-ANOVA</p>	<p>Post-90s > Post-90s/Generation Z > Retired people</p> <p>Age differences in authenticity perception are most significant Middle-aged groups have the highest requirements for authenticity Table 4.19-ANOVA</p>	<p>Middle-aged/Retired group, still have a strong willingness to purchase</p> <p>The young group has the strongest purchasing intention</p> <p>The purchasing decisions of Middle-aged/Elderly groups are more cautious</p> <p>Post-90s < Post-90s/Generation Z > Retired people</p> <p>There is a significant age difference in purchase intention Table 4.19-ANOVA</p> <p>Age itself has an independent positive driving effect on purchase intention The older the age, the stronger the driving effect of design features on the purchase intention Table 4.32-HRA</p>
	Income	<p>High-end materials/ Limited design/ Cultural values</p> <p>Cultural and practical design balance</p> <p>Cost-effectiveness/ Functionality</p> <p>High-income group > Middle-income group > Low-income group</p> <p>Income level is positively correlated with design preference Table 4.30-SEM-H20</p> <p>Tourists with higher incomes are more sensitive to design features Table 4.34-HRA</p>	<p>High-income group > Middle-income group > Low-income group</p> <p>Income has only a marginal effect on perception authenticity Table 4.20-ANOVA</p>	<p>Willing pay a premium for high-end designs</p> <p>Aesthetic and practical balance</p> <p>Prior/Practicality, it might also not be enough to buy souvenirs</p> <p>High-income group > Middle-income group > Low-income group</p> <p>High-income tourists have a significantly higher purchasing intention than low-income groups Income level significantly enhances the impact of design features on purchase intention Table 4.34-HRA</p>
	Education level	<p>Aesthetic features / Cultural value</p> <p>High authenticity/ Academic value</p> <p>Prefer intuitive design</p> <p>Secondary education group > Highly educated group > Low education group</p> <p>Education level has a significant impact on design preferences Table 4.30-SEM-H20</p> <p>The preference for design features is more prominent among middle and higher education groups Middle and higher education groups are the core consumption driving force Table 4.21-ANOVA</p>	<p>Secondary education group > Highly educated group > Low education group</p> <p>Education level has a certain trend effect on perception authenticity Higher education may affect authenticity evaluation through cultural cognition Table 4.21-ANOVA</p>	<p>Associate Degree have the strongest purchasing intention / More easily driven by design</p> <p>Purchase less frequently/ Value cultural symbols and craftsmanship</p> <p>Prefer intuitive design</p> <p>Secondary education group > Highly educated group > Low education group</p> <p>The purchase intention of the highly educated group is higher than that of the low educated group The higher the education level, the stronger the impact of design features on purchase intention Table 4.35-HRA</p>

Figure 6.1: Proposed Framework of Demographic Impacts

The quantitative research supports the mediating function of authenticity, aligning with Guo and Zhu's (2023) theory that perceived authenticity serves as a crucial channel for design features to influence consumer behaviour. Perceived authenticity mediates the impact of design elements via the triple path of "Cognition (cultural authenticity) – Behaviour (purchase and authenticity association) – Attitude (imitation rejection)" (Figure 5.3), with the mediating effect accounting for 57% (Appendix Q). The middle-aged group is the most concerned with authenticity, whereas the high-income and highly educated groups prioritise certification and traceability.

Finally, by integrating quantitative and qualitative analysis, the study identified the characteristics of Chinese tourists' consumption scenarios and behaviour patterns. Chinese tourists prefer souvenirs that have cultural connotations, Unique, practicality, and beauty, especially unique regional symbols that emphasise representativeness and originality. Their interest in traditional handicrafts such as calligraphy and ceramics further reflects their recognition and respect for traditional culture. When choosing, they prioritise practical functions and regard books, historical documents, etc. as cultural education carriers to help them. Purchasing reasons vary, with emotional connection (recording trip experiences) and high-value expectations serving as the primary driving forces. Museums and cultural centres attract high-value consumption, while online platforms encourage young people to repurchase "internet celebrity items".

The confirmed moderating effects of demographics compel a move away from a "one-size-fits-all" approach to a segmented marketing strategy. This research translates abstract demographic variables into actionable consumer archetypes (e.g., the tradition-sensitive mid-lifer, the experience-focused female tourist), demonstrating that the efficacy of design is contingent upon the viewer's personal context.

In summary, this research achieved three primary research objectives through mixed research. First, it clarified aesthetics, functionality, and Unique as core design features and refined the optimisation direction through material and category preferences. Second, it revealed the stratified impact of demographic variables on design preferences, laying the foundation for differentiated marketing for different genders, ages, and income groups. Third, it developed a theoretical model of "Personal factor–Design feature–Perceived authenticity–

Purchase intention” to improve understanding of the cultural consumption decision-making process.

6.4 Theoretical Contribution

This research constructs and empirically validates a multi-dimensional theoretical model of “Personal factor - Design feature- Perceived authenticity- Purchase intention” for cultural souvenir purchase decisions, By operationalising and integrating the theoretical lenses of Peircean semiotics and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), it directly addresses the core research problem defined in Chapter 1, understanding the decision-making mechanisms of Chinese tourists purchasing cultural souvenirs, and fills the following specific academic gaps identified in the literature review:

Firstly, it deepens the theoretical dimension of design features. Breaking through the traditional single attribute analysis, this research developed a three-dimensional driving model of “Aesthetic, Care and Travel, Unique”, This directly tackles the research gap concerning the lack of in-depth, empirical analysis of distinct design features for cultural souvenirs. The study advances prior knowledge by systematically applying Peircean semiotics: it frames design features as representamina (signs) that carry cultural meaning. The verified influence hierarchy of “Aesthetic > Care and Travel > Unique” empirically demonstrates which types of “signs” most effectively generate the interpretant (understanding) that leads to purchase intention within the TPB framework. This moves beyond descriptive feature lists to provide a theoretically grounded, hierarchical model of how design functions as a communicative sign within tourist consumption.

Secondly, it broadens the explanatory scope of demographic variables. The research confirms that gender, age, income, and education level significantly influence design preferences and moderate their impact on purchase intention. This addresses the population-specific gap noted in Section 2.7 by providing one of the first integrated analyses focused on Chinese tourists. More profoundly, it advances theoretical understanding by proposing and evidencing a four-axis mechanism “Social role expectations - Intergenerational cultural cognition - Economic capital - Cultural capital” that explains how these variables reshape preferences. This mechanism synthesises Bem’s (1981) gender role theory with Bourdieu’s (1984) concepts of capital, offering a more contextualised and nuanced framework than prior studies that treated demographics as mere control variables. It illustrates how personal factors, conceptualised as background conditions in the TPB, systematically shape the subjective norms and behavioural beliefs associated with different design signs.

Thirdly, it improves the mediating mechanism of perceived authenticity. This study develops and validates the first three-path model of perceived authenticity “Cognition (cultural authenticity) - Behaviour (purchase and authenticity association) - Attitude (imitation rejection)” and confirms its complete mediating role between design features and purchase intention. This directly responds to the identified gap regarding the under-explored role of perceived authenticity in Chinese tourists’ purchase decisions (Section 2.7). The model provides a significant theoretical advancement by resolving a key tension in authenticity theory. It bridges the objectivist focus on original attributes (linked to the object in semiotics) and the constructivist focus on tourist experience (linked to the interpretant). By positioning authenticity as a multi-dimensional interpretant that is triggered by design signs and subsequently shapes behavioural intention (TPB), the research offers a coherent

framework that integrates MacCannell's (1973) situational perspective. It establishes a quantified mediation framework that future research can apply, moving the field from debating authenticity's definition to modelling its specific, measurable role in the consumption pathway.

6.5 Practical Contribution

This research presents a comprehensive analysis of Chinese tourists' behaviour in purchasing cultural souvenirs and the underlying determinants, with broad and far-reaching practical implications.

In terms of design, the findings demonstrate the need for designers and manufacturers to optimise souvenir design by balancing aesthetic value with cultural authenticity while also responding to the personalised needs of tourists based on demographic characteristics, achieving a harmonious integration of tradition and modernity.

It is recommended to prioritise aesthetic enhancement (e.g., colour schemes) to maximise purchase conversion and reinforce perceptions of authenticity through anti-counterfeit labels or craft demonstrations (e.g., videos showing the making process). Regarding gender differentiation, design for male consumers should emphasise functionality (e.g., multifunctionality), whereas design for female consumers should highlight aesthetic details (e.g., embroidery).

Differentiated pricing strategies should be adopted based on income levels: high-end customised products (e.g., limited editions, co-branded collections) for higher-income groups and affordable cultural derivatives (e.g., functional cultural-creative products) for lower-income consumers. Products aimed at older tourists should favour lightweight,

nostalgic styles, while offerings for younger consumers should emphasise innovative design and social appeal (e.g., tech features and photo-friendly designs). For highly educated tourists, cultural storytelling (e.g., craft history) should be accentuated, whereas simplified visual symbols are more appropriate for less educated tourists.

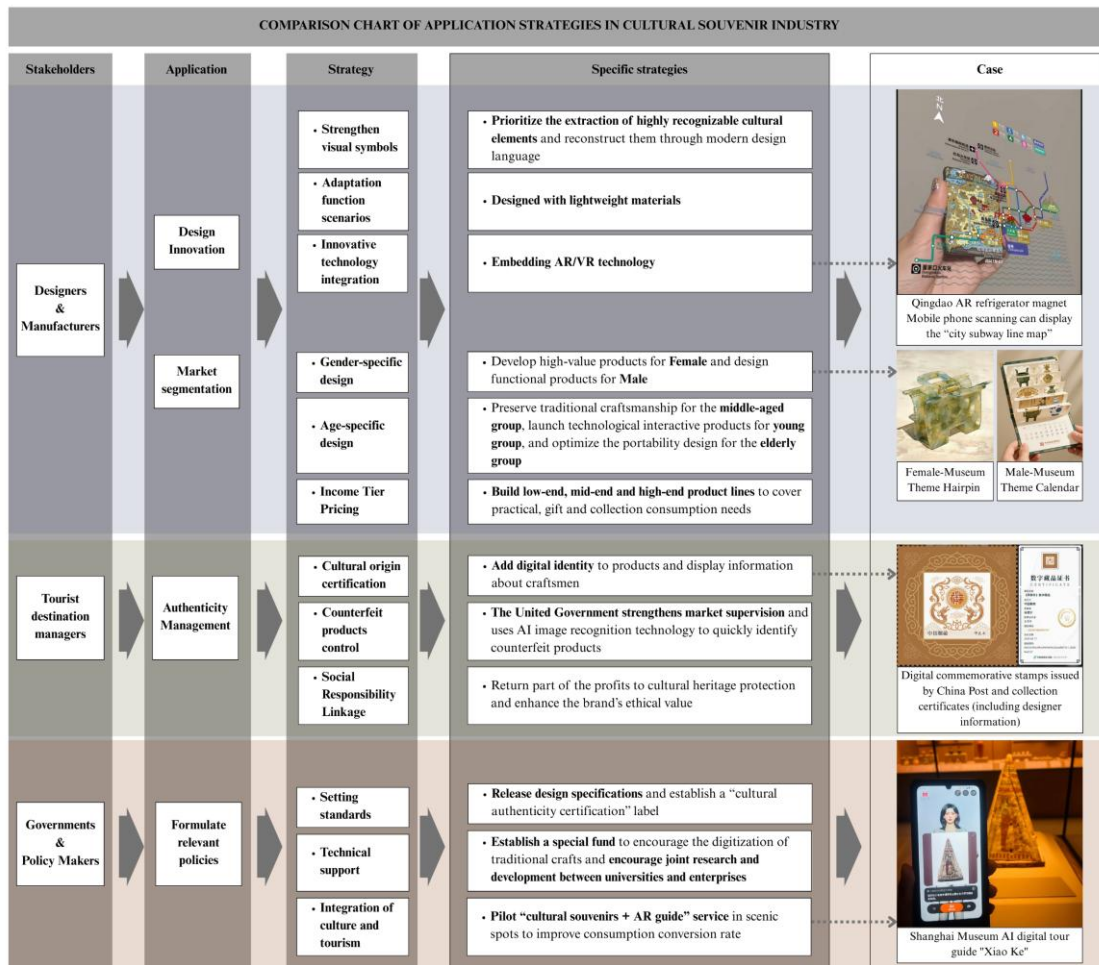
Regarding marketing strategies, the study underscores that destination managers should develop differentiated marketing approaches aligned with tourists' demographic profiles.

Promotional messages can incorporate targeted descriptors (e.g., “elegant bracelet designed for women”, “limited-edition pottery crafted for collectors”). Market segmentation (e.g., by age or income) can guide precise promotion strategies with corresponding messaging; for repeat visitors, messages could stress, “Buying genuine products supports cultural heritage” (via the PBA pathway); contrast displays among genuine and counterfeit products could be set up at scenic spots to visually underscore the value of authenticity (strengthening the ATI pathway). Regarding groups with high authenticity awareness, in-depth cultural experience activities (e.g., handicraft workshops) should be offered.

Data on purchasing behaviour (e.g., repurchase rates) can inform precision marketing and reinforce the connection between authenticity and consumer behaviour.

Regarding policy support and industry development, the study recommends that governments and policymakers promote the sustainable development of the cultural souvenir industry through technological assistance and financial incentives. This includes formulating industry standards, establishing authentication systems, strengthening market supervision, and deepening the integration of culture and tourism.

Overall, the findings of This research offer practical guidance for the design, marketing, and policy-driven development of cultural souvenirs. Based on insights and a summary of Chinese tourists’ souvenir preferences, the study proposes actionable recommendations for key stakeholders to optimise the cultural souvenir industry ecosystem. Figure 6.2 summarises the key pathways.



Note: The case pictures are from the Internet

Figure 6.2: A Comparison of Application Tactics in the Souvenir Market

6.6 Limitations

Although This research comprehensively investigated the decision-making mechanism of Chinese tourists when purchasing cultural souvenirs using a mixed technique, the following shortcomings must be addressed in future research and practice.

Firstly, there are limitations concerning the sample and data. This research focusses on the context of domestic tourism within China; consequently, the generalisability of its findings to the shopping behaviours of Chinese outbound tourists is limited. Whilst this design was initially intended to control for the variable of cultural, thereby enabling a clearer construction of the core theoretical model, it does indeed restrict the broader applicability of the conclusions in a global context. Regarding data collection, a convenience sampling method was employed via an online questionnaire platform. Although the sample size meets the statistical requirements for analytical methods such as Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), this approach may have introduced sampling bias. The proportions of respondents with a university education or higher (65.8%) and those aged 18-55 (97.9%) are particularly high. This may skew the findings towards reflecting the preferences of younger, highly educated demographics. Furthermore, the use of an online questionnaire resulted in a sample predominantly from economically developed eastern regions, underrepresenting tourists from central and western China. This makes it difficult for the study to capture and interpret potential preference divergences stemming from regional cultural differences.

Secondly, there are methodological constraints. This research is predominantly quantitative, with qualitative data collected only through two open-ended questions (N=320). Whilst this single-method design is advantageous for hypothesis testing with large samples, it may lack the depth required to fully capture complex, subjective constructs such as

perceived authenticity and the interpretation of cultural symbols. A mixed-methods design incorporating in-depth interviews or visual ethnography might more adequately uncover the underlying cultural logics and emotional motivations.

Finally, the scope and subject of the research have inherent boundaries. The study is strictly confined to tangible, material souvenirs and does not include digital souvenirs (such as NFTs or AR virtual items) or experiential intangible cultural heritage products. In an era where digital technology is profoundly reshaping consumption patterns, whilst this delineation ensured measurement validity and a focus on material semiotics, it also means the study fails to engage with a rapidly growing emerging market. The applicability of its conclusions to digital and experiential consumption domains is therefore debatable. Additionally, the study assumes a homogeneity in the demand for cultural souvenirs across the nation and does not provide a comparative analysis based on the distinct cultural characteristics of different destinations. This design prevents the research from revealing how the unique appeal of regional cultural symbols interacts with universal design principles, undoubtedly limiting a more segmented understanding of China's diverse cultural tourism market.

6.7 Future Work

Based on the core findings and identified limitations of This research, future research could deepen and expand the inquiry in the following directions to build a more comprehensive and nuanced research system for cultural souvenir consumption.

First, expanding research contexts and subject scope. To address the limitations of This research's focus on the domestic context and physical souvenirs, future work could

pursue cross-cultural consumer behaviour comparisons and globalised design strategies. This includes conducting comparative studies with international tourists, analysing preferences for cultural souvenir design features among visitors from different cultural backgrounds segmented by region (e.g., East Asia, Europe/North America, Africa). Specifically, dedicated studies targeting Chinese outbound tourists are warranted, involving cross-border consumption scenario analysis to investigate their decision-making logic when purchasing cultural souvenirs abroad and exploring the adaptive transformation mechanisms of regional symbols in the global marketplace. Systematically broadening the definition of research subjects to include digital souvenirs (e.g., NFTs, AR virtual items) and experiential cultural services (e.g., intangible cultural heritage workshops) within the theoretical framework is essential to validate their unique consumption logics and value perception mechanisms.

Second, advancing methodological innovation and data integration. To overcome the limitations of a single quantitative method and an online sample, future research should deepen dynamic behaviour tracking and employ mixed methods. A primary step is adopting qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews and focus groups to triangulate the quantitative findings of This research, thereby delving into the individualised connotations of complex constructs like authenticity and cultural identity. Longitudinal panel studies, tracking the souvenir consumption behaviours of the same tourist cohort over 1-3 years, could reveal the persistence of design feature influences and drivers of repeat purchases. Regarding sampling strategy, future studies should consciously strive to cover broader geographical areas (e.g., central and western China) and age groups (e.g., the silver generation), expanding qualitative research coverage to unearth the effects of regional economic disparities and the intergenerational digital divide on design preferences.

Third, deepening theoretical integration and segmented market insight. To further enhance the explanatory power of theory and the practical relevance of research, innovative theoretical integration and interdisciplinary studies are needed. This involves extending theories of sustainable consumption, and investigating the impact of sustainable design features like green certification and biodegradable materials on purchase decisions within the context of environmental policies. Crucially, implementing multi-destination comparative studies - for instance, comparing regions with distinct cultural characteristics like Tibet, Shanghai, and Xi'an - would empirically test the moderating role of regional cultural context in the design features-purchase intention relationship, thereby establishing important boundary conditions for This research's universal findings. Employing social network analysis and utilising big data to map the dissemination pathways of viral souvenirs on social media can analyse the amplifying effect of KOL recommendations on the utility of design features.

Finally, re-evaluating technology integration and the industry ecosystem. Future research should focus on how technological frontiers are reshaping the industry, deepening inquiry into AI-driven personalised design. This includes developing AI design tools based on tourist profiles to enable rapid souvenir generation. Exploring the application of blockchain technology in cultural provenance is also key, aiming to quantify how technological trust enhances perceived authenticity.

In summary, this research not only validates a series of theoretical hypotheses but also constructs an empirically tested theoretical model that systematically decodes the decision-making logic of Chinese tourists when purchasing cultural souvenirs. Its core value lies in the following aspects:

Theoretically, it provides an empirically optimised, integrated framework that combines semiotics and the theory of planned behaviour.

Practically, it offers industry practitioners actionable guidelines for market segmentation, product design, and marketing communication.

The ultimate contribution of this research lies in demonstrating that commercial success and cultural authenticity are not a zero-sum game. Instead, they can achieve synergistic success through a profound understanding of consumer behaviour.

The design and consumption of cultural souvenirs are, in essence, a multidimensional interplay of cultural identity, technological innovation, and market strategy. The findings of This research preliminarily reveal the interaction mechanisms among design features, group heterogeneity, and authenticity, providing a critical “decision-making map” for understanding this dynamic.

That said, the evolving nature of cultural consumption, the disruptive potential of technology, and the complexities brought by globalisation demand continued scholarly effort. Future research should adopt a more open interdisciplinary perspective, more refined methodological tools, and a more inclusive cross-cultural comparative framework. This will facilitate bidirectional breakthroughs in theoretical depth and practical innovation, ultimately supporting Chinese cultural souvenirs in transitioning from symbolic export to genuine value resonance within the global value chain.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Cultural variety show

1. **Masters in Forbidden City**, the documentary series “Masters in Forbidden City”, directed by Ye Jun and Xiao Han and produced by China Central Television (CCTV), comprises three episodes focused on restoring cultural relics. The programme was broadcast on CCTV’s ‘Documentary Editing Room’ and centres on the restoration of rare artefacts across many domains within the Palace Museum while engaging with the restorers’ personal narratives. The transmission occurred on CCTV-9 on January 7, 2016. The series received accolades, including recognition as one of China’s Top Ten Most Influential Documentaries of 2016 and the Excellent Domestic Documentary Feature award for the same year. The episodes address the repair of several artefacts: bronzes, court watches, and ceramics in the first; woodwork, lacquerware, inlaid treasures, and embroidery in the second; and paintings and calligraphy in the third.



Figure 1: Documentary ‘Masters in Forbidden City’

2. **Renewed: The Forbidden City**, “Renewed: The Forbidden City” is a cultural programme produced by the Palace Museum and Beijing Radio and Television Station (BRTV), consisting of three seasons. Each episode features guests and Forbidden City experts who locate treasures, examine the palace's history and culture, and collaborate

with designers and students to develop a cultural product that integrates innovation with the Forbidden City. Season one was broadcast from November 9, 2018, to January 11, 2019; season two from November 8, 2019, to January 10, 2020; and season three from October 24 to December 26, 2020.



Figure 2: Program Derivative Product

- National treasure**, “National Treasures” is a cultural show produced by China Media Group (CMG) and CCTV Documentary International Media Co., Ltd., with actor Zhang Guoli serving as Narrator 001. The programme comprises four seasons: Season One (December 3, 2017 - February 11, 2018), Season Two (December 9, 2018 - February 9, 2019), Season Three (commenced December 6, 2020), and Performance Season (October 23 - December 25, 2021), all broadcast on CCTV Variety Channel. Characteristics of the season: Season One features Chinese artefacts, accompanied by narratives from prominent individuals. Season Two has three museum artefacts and celebrities recount stories in each episode. In Season Three, celebrities showcase 27 artefacts through artistic interpretation and research using sophisticated technology. Performance Season utilises “AI+VR” (naked-eye 3D) technology to exhibit 81 items. On November 20, 2019, "National Treasures" was screened in Rome, Italy, focusing on the issue of safeguarding cultural assets. The creators entered into a broadcasting agreement with Italian Class Media Group.

	
<p>Season One: Big Grams Tripod</p>	<p>Season Two: Ouma UNITA Book</p>
	
<p>Season Three: Dunhuang Manuscripts</p>	<p>Performance Season: The dance drama “Five Stars Arising from the East”</p>

Figure 3: Cultural Exploration Program “National Treasures”

Appendix B: Chinese policy “14th Five-Year Plan for Tourism Development”

The State Council of the People’s Republic of China issued and implemented this plan on December 22, 2021. This paper is crucial for directing the advancement of China's tourist sector over the forthcoming five years. The strategy aims to foster high-quality development and attain sustainable development objectives within the tourism sector. The strategy delineates essential tasks, including enhancing the quality of tourism services, fortifying tourism infrastructure development, and advocating for the standardisation of market order in tourism. It also underscores the “Internet Plus Tourism” development strategy and the invention of intelligent tourism. The strategy emphasises the profound integration of cultural tourism and the tourism industry's contribution to fostering equitable regional economic growth. The Chinese government aims to address the increasing demands of its citizens for an improved quality of life and to offer Chinese insights and solutions for the advancement of the global tourist sector. Website: <https://www.ndrc.gov.cn>.

Appendix C: National Cultural Exhibition Zones

These are cultural industry parks acknowledged by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Numerous cultural enterprises collaborate effectively, contributing to the expansion of the local cultural industry. Since 2004, five cohorts of these zones have been designated. On March 28, 2023, an additional 15 zones were conferred this designation.

Initial Cohort of National Cultural Demonstration Zones

	
Xi'an-Quijiang New District	Overseas Chinese Town Enterprises Co.

Second Batch of National Cultural Industry Demonstration Parks

	
Shandong -Qufu New District Cultural Industry Park	Liaoning-Shenyang Qipanshan Development Area

Third Batch of National Cultural Demonstration zones

	
Henan -Kaifeng Song Capital Ancient City Cultural Industry Park	Shanghai-Zhangjiang Cultural Industry Park

Fourth Batch of National Cultural Industry Demonstration Parks



Hunan-Changsha Tianxin Cultural Industry Park



Sichuan-Chengdu QingyangLvzhou Cultural Industry Park

Fifth Batch of National Cultural Demonstration zones



Anhui-Bengbu Dayu Cultural Industry Park



Gansu-Dunhuang Cultural Industry Park

2020 Newly Added National Cultural Demonstration zones



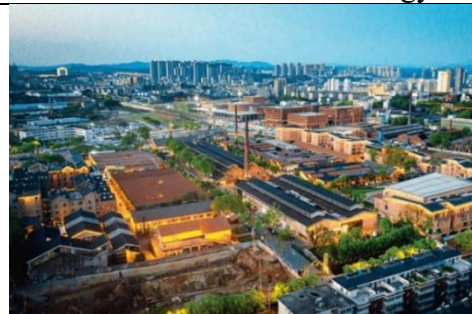
Hebei-“21st Century Mountain Resort” Cultural Tourism Industrial Park








Jilin-Northeast Asia Cultural and Creative Science and Technology Park



Zhejiang-Hangzhou Baima Lake Ecological and Creative City



Jiangxi- Jingdezhen Taoxi Chuan Cultural and Creative District

	
<p>Shandong-Tai'erzhuang Ancient City Cultural Industry Park</p>	<p>Hunan-Xiangtan Zhaoshan Cultural Industry Park</p>
	
<p>Guangdong-Guangzhou Beijing Road Cultural Core Area</p>	<p>Chongqing-Nanbin Road Cultural Industry Park</p>
	
<p>Yunnan-Jianshui Purple Pottery Cultural Industry Park</p>	

2023 Newly Added National Cultural Demonstration zones

	
<p>Tianjin-Binhai New Area Zhishan Cultural and Creative Industry Park</p>	<p>Hebei-Quyang Sculpture Cultural Industry Park</p>

	
<p>Jilin-Advertising Creative Cultural Industry Park</p>	<p>Shanghai-Dachuang Zhi Innovation Development Demonstration Park</p>
	
<p>Jiangsu-NanjingQinhuai Distinctive Cultural Industry Park</p>	<p>Suzhou-Yuanhetang Cultural Industry Park</p>
	
<p>Zhejiang-Hengdian Film and Television Cultural Industry Cluster</p>	<p>Quzhou-Confucianism Cultural Industry Park</p>
	
<p>Anhui-Hefei Baohe Creative Cultural Industry Park</p>	<p>Shandong-QingzhouZhongchen Calligraphy and Painting Art Industry Park</p>








Figure 1: National Cultural Demonstration Zones

Appendix D: Introduction of ten Chinese handicraft souvenirs

1. Ceramic (Principal city: Jiangxi Province), A classification of Chinese arts and crafts.

The artistic value of traditional Chinese porcelain is significantly elevated by its elegant form and exceptional quality.

Example:







ICH work	Related cultural souvenirs	
		
	Mini ornament	Fridge magnets
Blue-and-white wrap bottles (China Ceramics Museum collection)		
	Aroma diffuser	Teacup

Case: Brand souvenirs × Chinese ICH



	
DIOR 2023 VIP souvenir	STARBUCKS 2025 blue and white porcelain series

2. **Lacquerware** (Principal city: Guangdong Province). A category of functional and visually appealing objects made from wood or other materials. China is the first nation globally to comprehend paint's qualities and alter its hues for aesthetic and creative purposes.

Example:






ICH work	Related cultural souvenirs	
		
	Pendant	Tea bowl
		
	Storage box	Fridge magnets
<p>Shi Hua Lu Yan Corner Box (The Palace Museum collection)</p>		

Case: Brand souvenirs × Chinese ICH

	
<p>Jaeger-LeCoultre 2023 VIP souvenir</p>	<p>MGP × Lacquerware 2024 Earrings</p>

3. **Woodcarving** (Principal city: Zhejiang Province). In China, wood carving is referred to as “folk craft”. Three categories: relief carving, root carving, and three-dimensional round carving. Wood carving originated in China approximately 7,000 years ago in the Neolithic period. The pinnacle of Chinese craft technology occurred during the Tang Dynasty.

Example:

ICH work	Related cultural souvenirs	
		
	Bookmark	Pendant
		
China Wood Sculpture Museum collection	Comb	Seal

Case: Brand souvenirs × Chinese ICH



TIFFANY&CO. 2024 Spring Festival VIP souvenirs



HERMES 2023 Mid-Autumn Festival VIP souvenir

4. **Cloisonne** (Principal city: Beijing city). Created through the amalgamation of copper and enamel via multiple stages. It is a renowned traditional craft in Beijing. Cloisonné, China's national intangible cultural property, represents a delicate and refined skill that epitomises the zenith of ancient Chinese workmanship.

Example:

ICH work	Related cultural souvenirs	
		
	<p>Phoenix coronet fridge magnets</p>	<p>Earrings</p>
		
<p>Cloisonne Art Museum collection</p>	<p>Scented candle</p>	<p>Bracelet</p>

Case: Brand souvenirs × Chinese ICH



GUCCI. 2023 VIP souvenirs





EVIDENS 2023 VIP souvenir

5. **Jade Carving** (Principal city: Henan Province). It is one of China’s oldest carvings. Jade carving is the technique of manipulating jade to produce exquisite artefacts. A piece of jade can be animated by exceptional carving skills, commencing with the raw stone and culminating in the final product.

Example:






ICH work	Related cultural souvenirs	
		
<p>The Chinese Twisted Branch Thin-tire Jade Pot (The British Museum collection)</p>	<p>Pendant</p> 	<p>Barrette</p> 
	<p>Phone case (with stand)</p>	<p>Fridge magnets</p>

Case: Brand souvenirs × Chinese ICH

	
<p>CHLOE. 2023 VIC souvenirs</p>	<p>EMERALD cigarette 2024 Special edition</p>

6. **Embroidery** (Principal city: Jiangsu Province). It is an encompassing term for various needlework and thread decorative designs stitched into fabric. It is a traditional folk handcraft from China, with a history spanning at least two to three millennia.

Example:






ICH work	Related cultural souvenirs	
		
<p>Playing with cranes hanging screen (The Palace Museum collection)</p>	<p>Scarf</p>	<p>Brooch</p>
		
	<p>Screen</p>	<p>Sachet</p>

Case: Brand souvenirs × Chinese ICH

	
<p>DIOR. 2022 VIC souvenirs</p>	<p>Lore piana 2023 Father's Day souvenir</p>

7. **Shadow puppet** (Principal city: Sichuan Province). This silhouette figure is crafted from cardboard or animal hide and illuminated with vibrant fabric. It is a prop for “Shadow Puppets”.

Example:

ICH work	Related cultural souvenirs	
		
	Night lamp	Earrings
Chengdu Museum collection		
	Plaything	Saw Puzzle

Case: Brand souvenirs × Chinese ICH

	
Dolce & Gabbana 2024 VIP souvenirs	Club Monaco 2023 Co-branded product

8. **Paper-cut** (Principal city: Hubei Province). This folk craft serves to adorn objects or collaborate with other folk activities. It entails the incision of designs onto paper via scissors or a carving knife. Paper cutting enjoys a substantial public following in China.

Example:

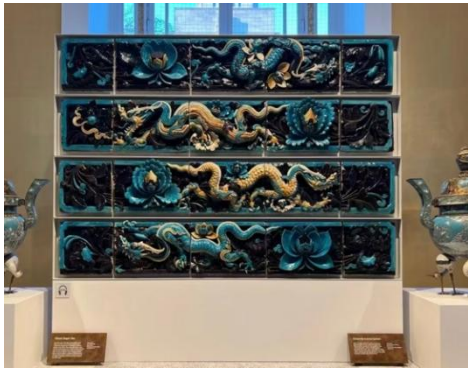


ICH work	Related cultural souvenirs	
		
	Phone stand	Calendar
		
The China National Art Museum Exhibit work	Night lamp	Furniture for display

Case: Brand souvenirs × Chinese ICH

	
LV. 2023 VIP souvenirs	GUCCI. 2023 VIP souvenirs

9. **Coloured Glaze** (Principal city: Shandong Province). It is a synthetic crystal that has been subjected to temperatures above one thousand degrees. The ancients designated the multicoloured glass as “five-colour stone.” Glass was originally regarded as more precious than jade due to its scarcity.

Example:

ICH work	Related cultural souvenirs	
		
	Colored Glaze flower decoration	Decorative painting
		
Ming Dynasty dragon Colored Glaze brick (The British Museum collection)	Teacup	Ink cartridge






Case: Brand souvenirs × Chinese ICH


BVLGARE. 2023 VIP souvenirs


Rolls-Royce 2023 VIP souvenirs

10. Bamboo Weaving (Principal city: Shanghai Province). Bamboo weaving trades possess a rich history and can be categorised into exquisite silk or coarse silk.

Example:

ICH work	Related cultural souvenirs	
		
	Teacup mat	Pendant
<p>Flowers and birds picture ivory handle circular fan (The Palace Museum collection)</p>		
	Bookmark	Mandarin ducks and bamboo ornaments

Case: Brand souvenirs × Chinese ICH



Appendix E: Case 1 - Augmented Reality Phoenix Coronet refrigerator magnet

On the inaugural day of sales, 2,300 units of the cultural souvenir “AR Phoenix Coronet Fridge Magnet” (Figure 1), designed as a prototype for the cultural artefact “Empress Dowager Xiaoduan’s The Nine Dragon Nine Phoenix Crown” (Figure 2) at the National Museum of China (NMC), achieved remarkable popularity in September 2024, securing the distinction of “Top Seller” among souvenirs over the past two decades.



Figure 1: AR Phoenix Coronet Fridge Magnet

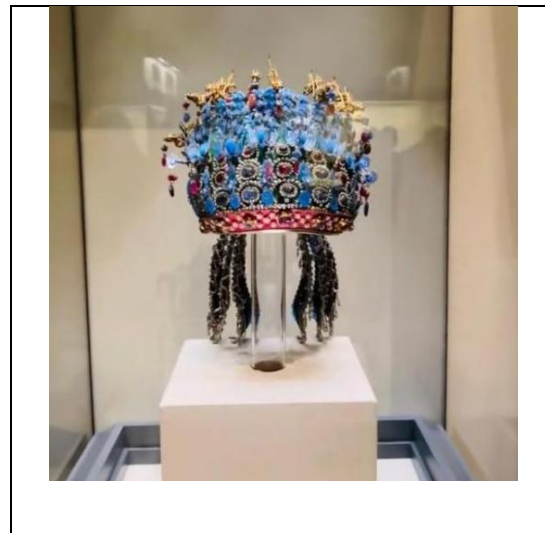


Figure 2: Empress Dowager Xiaoduan’s the Nine Dragon Nine Phoenix Crown (NMC Collection)

The AR metal crest refrigerator sticker utilises augmented reality (AR) technology. Customers can engage with the augmented reality effect by scanning the AR QR code on the product package using a smartphone. The effect enables consumers to observe a virtual representation of the crested crown on the screen and align it with their head to experience wearing it (Figure 3). The phoenix crown represents a queen in ancient China, while the fridge sticker’s inscription “For your coronation” imparts a sense of significance and esteem to visitors, akin to being included in a coronation ceremony. Such experiences can enhance

their well-being and foster a deeper connection with history. They may disseminate their augmented reality experience online, enhancing the product's popularity and value. Since August 13, NMC has restricted daily sales owing to a product shortfall, modifying production and sales accordingly. Popular cultural souvenirs, such as augmented reality fridge magnets featuring a phoenix crown, enhance commercial success. The stickers transitioned from one to three foundries, yielding a daily production of 5,000. The elevated demand for these magnets additionally generates increased local employment opportunities. The increasing number of museum visitors and souvenir purchases lessens the divide between individuals and cultural artefacts. The Nine Dragon Nine Phoenix Crown, an essential exhibit in the Ming and Qing Dynasties Hall, illustrates the impact of digital technology on the purchasing behaviours of Chinese tourists regarding souvenirs.

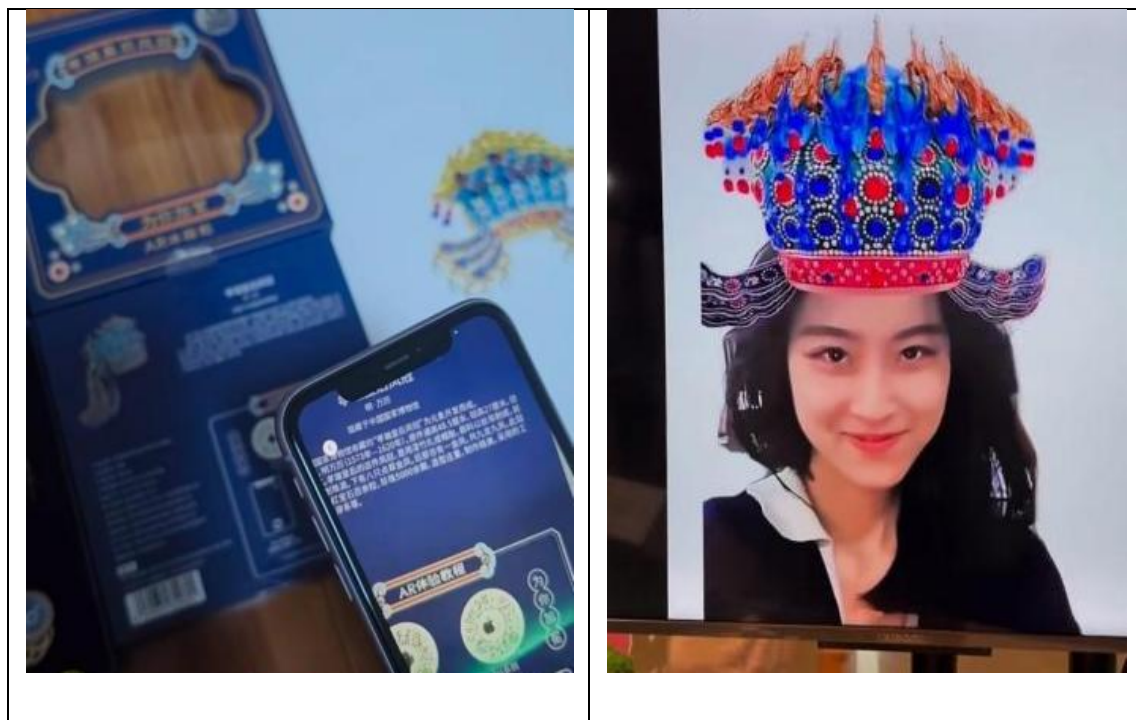


Figure 3: AR Phoenix Coronet Fridge Magnet QR Code Scanning and AR Interaction

Appendix F: Case 2 - LOEWE × Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage - Jade Carving

In 2024, coinciding with the Chinese Year of the Dragon, LOEWE introduced a “Jade” themed product line that integrates jade and the dragon motif to appeal to clients who appreciate tradition. Six jade carvings (Figure F.1) served as inspiration for the six colour choices for the new jade Flamenco Mini handbag (Figure F.2). Every purse features a unique inside pocket containing a corresponding jade, signifying prosperity for the year (Figure F.2). This design adheres to the Chinese tradition of carrying lucky stones while enhancing the product's cultural and emotional significance. LOEWE commissioned jade carving artisans Cheng, Qiu, and Yin to create three pendants. These pendants exhibit classic designs and traditional aesthetics, catering to contemporary consumers’ preference for a fusion of tradition and fashion, aligning with the spirit of gift-giving during the Spring Festival (refer to Figure F.3). LOEWE’s Flamenco Mini handbag amalgamates culture, sentiment, and contemporary fashion. It is a jade-inspired memento featuring classic hues and charming motifs, beloved on Chinese social media. It honours ancient jade carvings and supports ICH crafts through skilful collaboration. LOEWE creates unique gifts inspired by Chinese culture. Consumers choose LOEWE's significant items over simplistic ones, hence enhancing their affinity for the brand. The data indicates that possessing a distinctive design enhances the sale of cultural souvenirs and can improve a company’s market performance.

		
Topaz bird The Palace Museum Collection	Gray jade flower receptacle The Palace Museum Collection	Jasper mantis The Palace Museum Collection




(Shang Dynasty)	(Qing Dynasty)	(Qing Dynasty)
		
Emerald tripod furnace The Metropolitan Museum Collection (Qing Dynasty)	Agate snuff bottle The Palace Museum Collection (Qing Dynasty)	Jade Lying Camel The Palace Museum Collection (The Six Dynasties)

Figure 1: LOEWE Flamenco Mini colour source

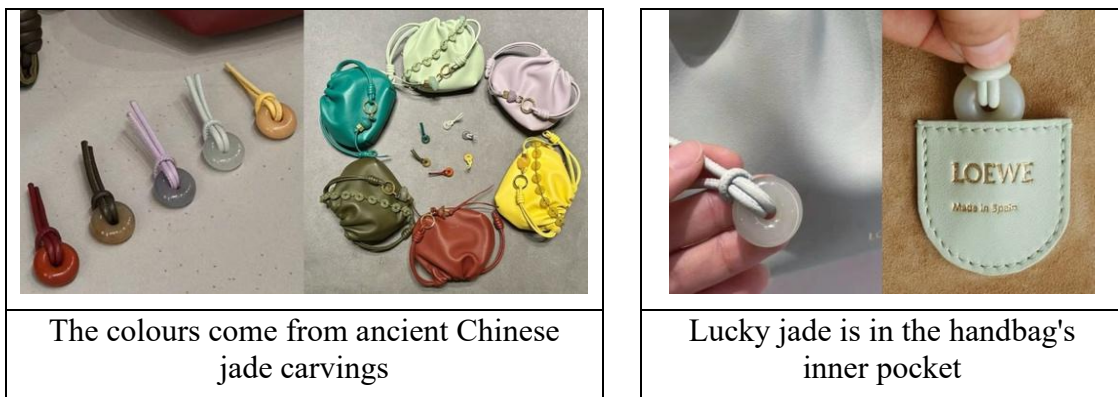


Figure 2: LOEWE Flamenco Mini

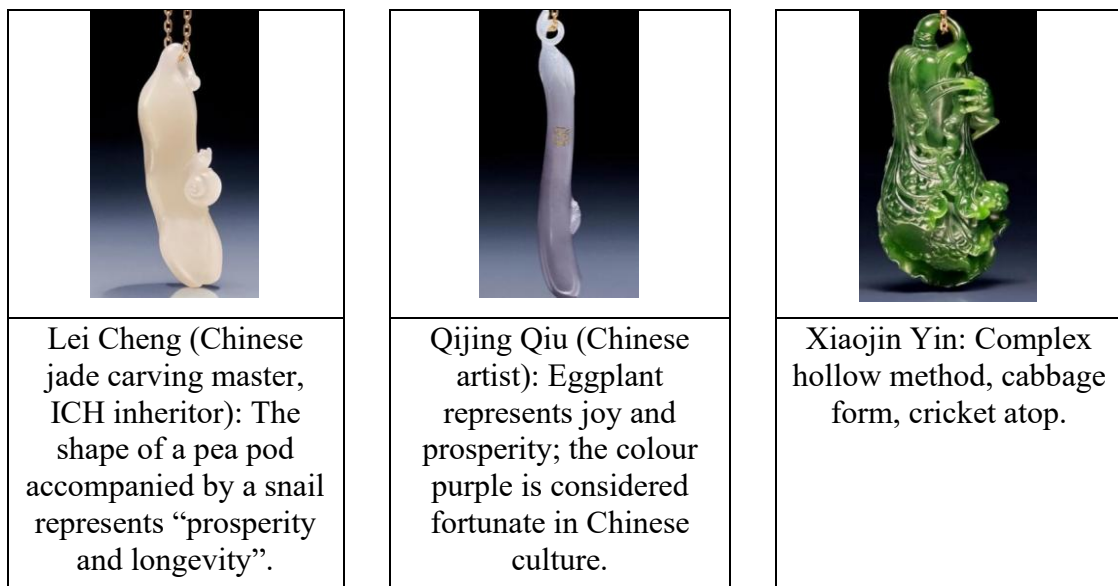


Figure 3: LOEWE × Masterpieces of Jade Carving

Appendix J: The Chinese iteration of the “Jellycat” cultural souvenir

In May 2024, Jellycat introduced a “play house” packing service in its stores located in Beijing and Shanghai. Staff execute tasks immediately, akin to frying an aubergine figurine. This exhibit attracted numerous Chinese tourists, and footage of their interactions with staff became popular online (Refer to Figure 1). Nonetheless, despite the tourists’ fervour, the experience is constrained by exorbitant expenses and distance. Jellycat items are costly, exceeding 300 yuan, along with supplementary resale charges.

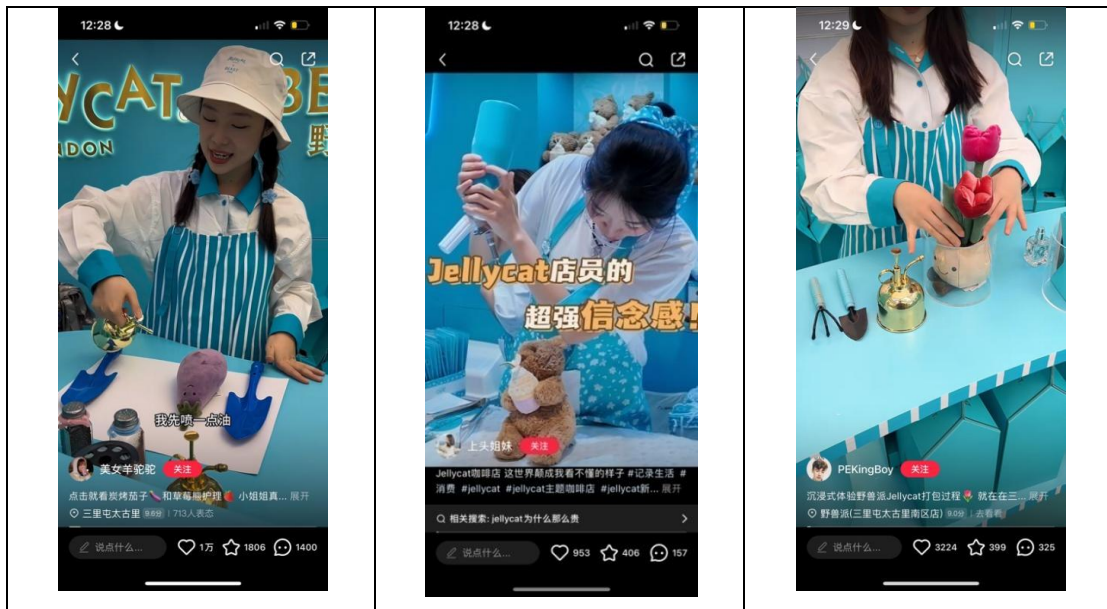


Figure 1: Jellycat Packaging Scene

Cultural and tourism agencies in China replicated the Jellycat idea, creating a domestic variant. The Gansu Museum was the first to provide doll souvenirs. In July 2024, they introduced Gansu Malatang dolls, capitalising on the local malatang fad. The dolls exhibit simplistic faces and feature rice cakes, crab sticks, and broccoli (Refer to Figure 2).



Figure 2: Doll souvenir

They replicated the house play concept for sales purposes. Customers select six skewers, specify the level of spiciness and quantity, and then present them to the clerk for preparation. The clerk feigns adding salt, MSG, and various condiments to the “malatang.” Figure 3.

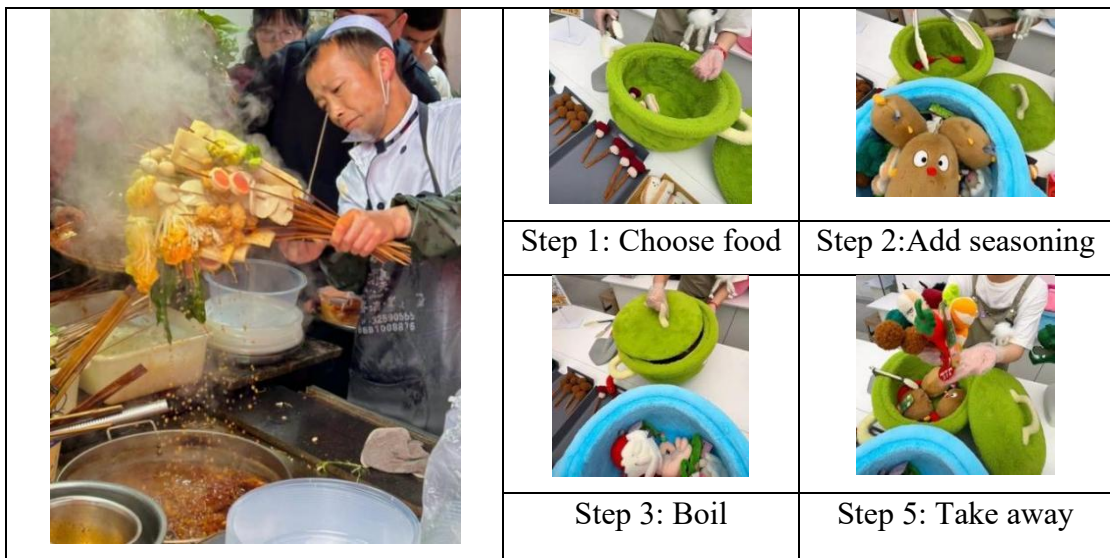


Figure 3: Gansu Museum “Malatang Doll”

Jellycat, a Chinese delicacy, rapidly proliferated to prominent tourist destinations. Following the Mid-Autumn Festival and National Day, the economical domestic “jellycat” gained widespread popularity across the nation via social media. Every city features a distinctive meal transformed into an adorable doll with interactive purchasing choices. For instance, Xi’an’s Rou Jiamo consists of a bun and a pork patty (Figure 4). Dongguan, located in Guangdong, is renowned for its herbal tea. A store offers herbal tea dolls for sale. The clerk quantifies the tea, encloses it in paper, secures it with a knot, and extends wishes for a swift recovery to the consumers (Figure 5). Doll souvenirs convey delight and cultural

significance, gaining popularity on social media. They are souvenirs and sentimental companions. Retail personnel enhance emotional significance. Souvenirs purchased by tourists embody the local culture.



Figure 4: Xi'an "Rou Jia Mo Doll"

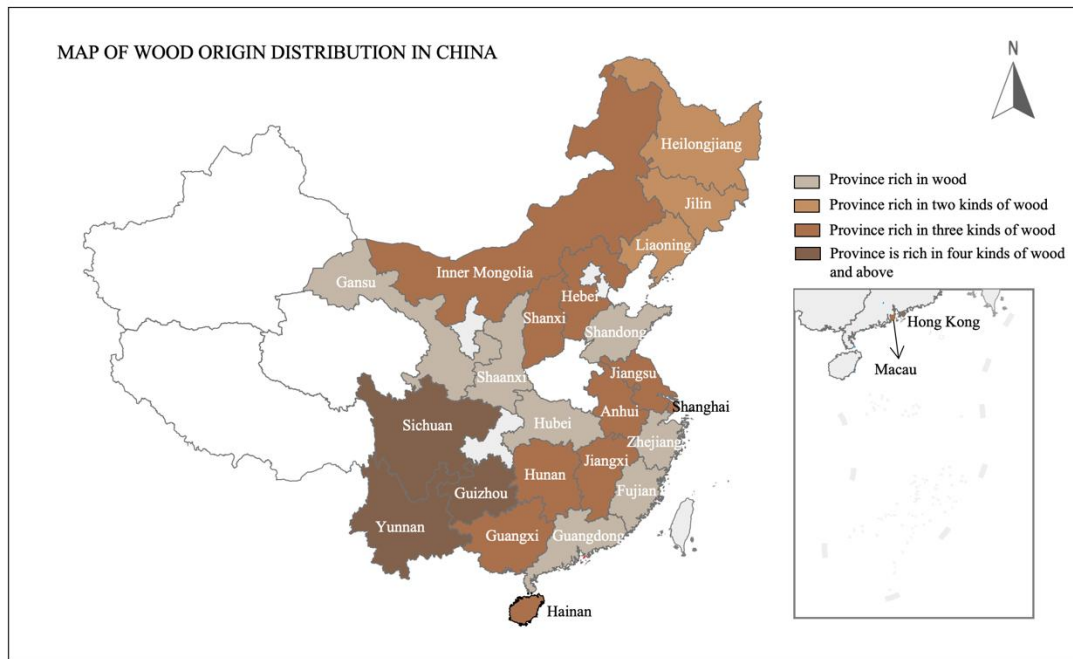


Figure 5: Guangdong "Herbal Tea Doll"

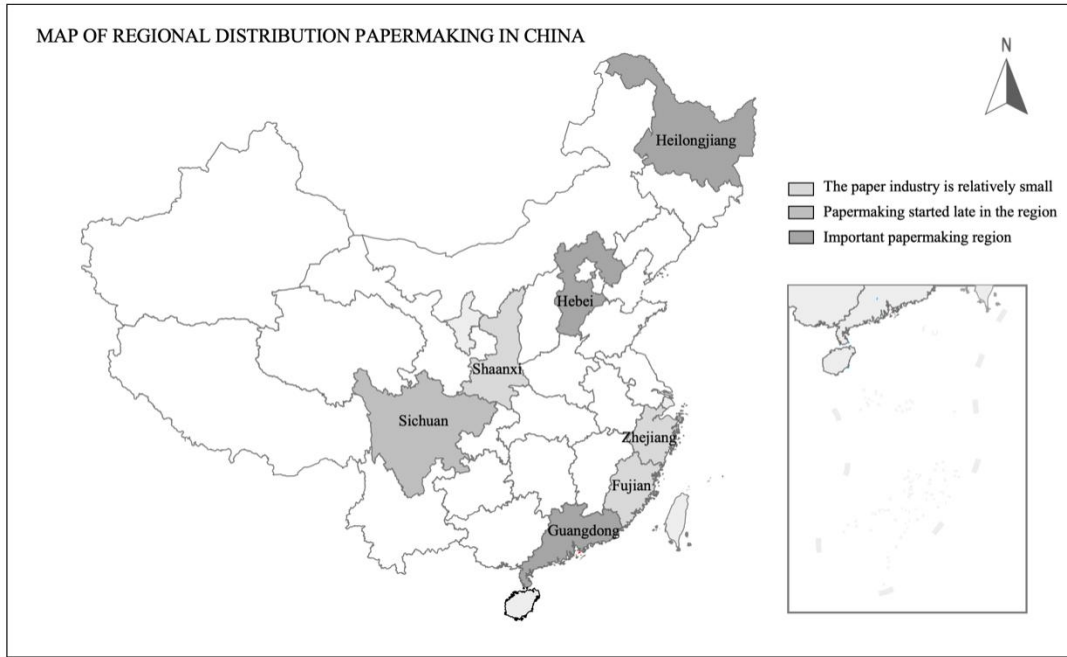
Appendix H: Chinese cultural souvenir materials



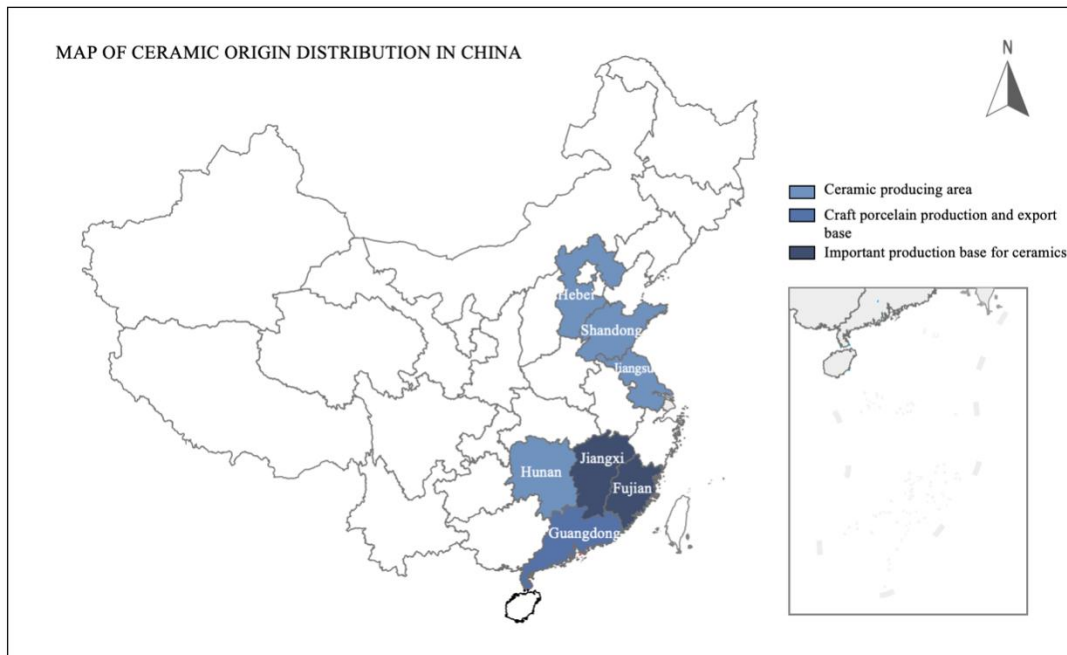
Map of Jade Origin Distribution in China
(Source: by author)



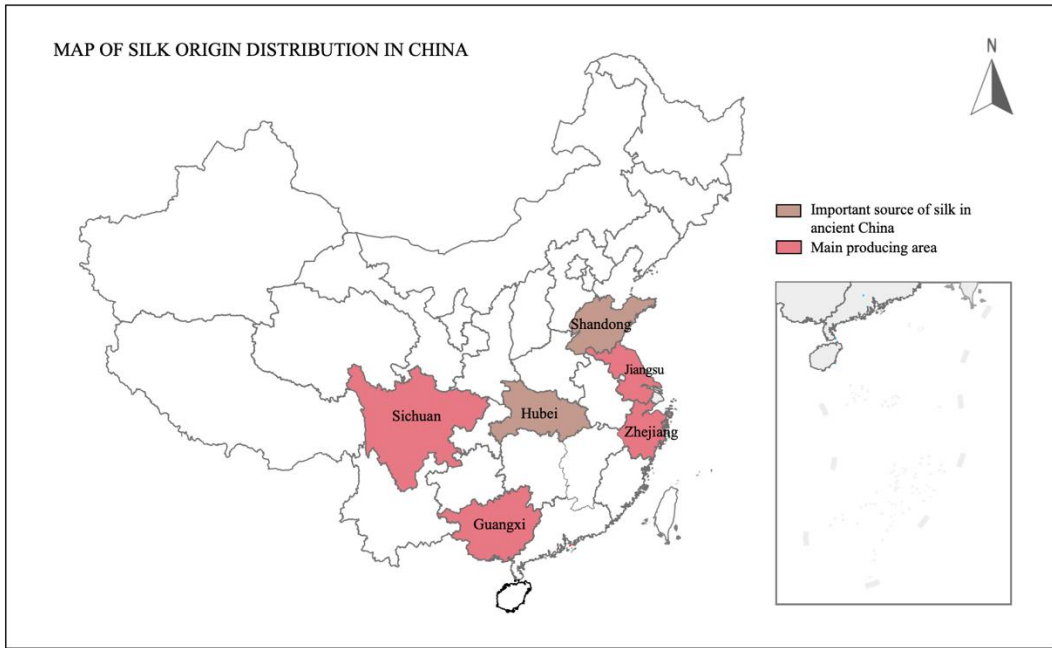
Map of Wood Origin Distribution in China
(Source: by author)



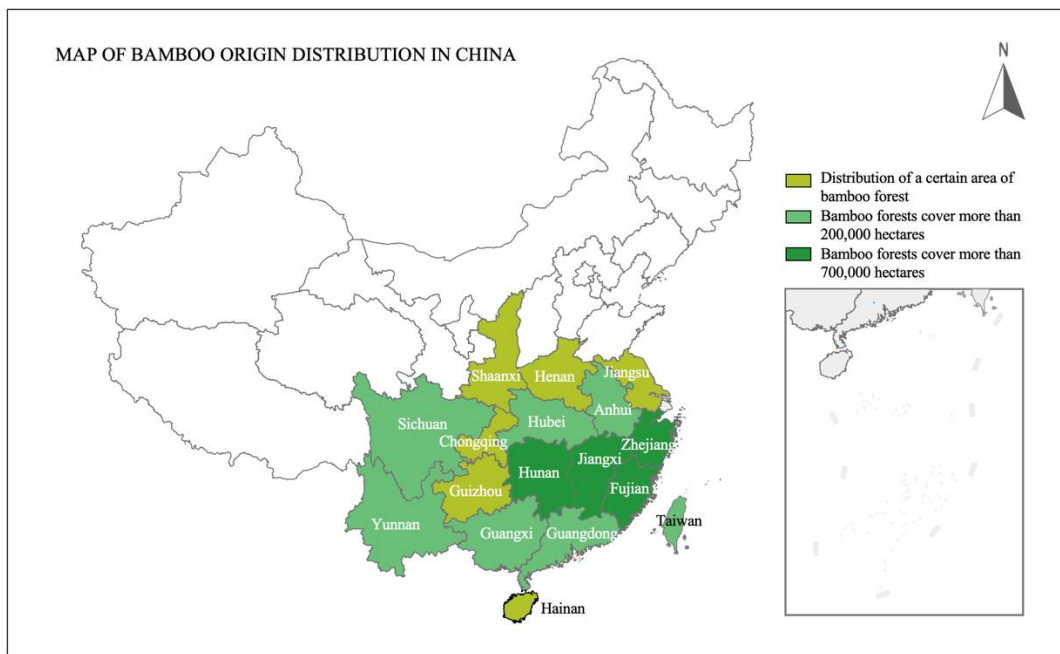
Map of Regional Distribution Papermaking in China
(Source: by author)



Map of Ceramic Origin Distribution in China
(Source: by author)



Map of Silk Origin Distribution in China
(Source: by author)



Map of Bamboo Origin Distribution in China
(Source: by author)

Appendix I: The Most Relevant Studies (Source: Bernardo et al., 2023)

Citation Network	Title	Methodology
Bigné et al. (2008)	The impact of experiential consumption cognitions and emotions on Behavioural intentions	Quantitative
Swanson & Horridge (2006)	Travel motivations as souvenir purchase indicators	Quantitative
Kim & Littrell (2001)	Souvenir buying intentions for self versus others	Quantitative
Lehto et al. (2004)	Tourist shopping preferences and expenditure Behaviours: The case of the Taiwanese outbound market	Quantitative
Litirell et al. (1994)	Souvenirs and Tourism Styles	Quantitative
Oh et al. (2004)	Predictors of tourists' shopping Behaviour: Examination of socio-demographic characteristics and trip typologies	Quantitative
Yu & Littrell (2003)	Product and process orientations to tourism shopping	Quantitative
Swanson (2004)	Tourists' and retailers' perceptions of souvenirs	Quantitative
Kim & Littrell (1999)	Predicting souvenir purchase intentions	Quantitative
Hu & Yu (2007)	Segmentation by craft selection criteria and shopping involvement	Quantitative
Swanson & Horridge (2004)	A structural model for souvenir consumption, travel activities, and tourist demographics	Quantitative
Yu & Littrell (2005)	Tourists' shopping orientations for handcrafts: What are the key influences?	Quantitative
Boley et al. (2013)	Social media picture posting and souvenir purchasing behaviour: Some initial findings	Quantitative
Boissevain (1979)	The impact of tourism on a dependent island. Gozo, Malta	Qualitative
Ramsay (2009)	Taking-place: Refracted enchantment and the habitual spaces of the tourist souvenir	Qualitative
Lehto et al. (2001)	Does the visiting friends and relatives typology make a difference? A study of the international VFR market to the United States	Qualitative
He et al. (2008)	Distribution of economic benefits from ecotourism: A case study of Wolong Nature Reserve for Giant Pandas in China	Qualitative
Morgan & Pritchard (2005)	On souvenirs and metonymy: Narratives of memory, metaphor and materiality	Qualitative
Mossberg (2007)	A marketing approach to the tourist experience	Conceptual
Littrell et al. (1993)	What makes a craft souvenir authentic?	Conceptual

Note: Quantitative-Psychometric and experimental methodologies; Qualitative-case studies and phenomenological studies; Conceptual-theoretical studies.

Appendix J: Questionnaire



We cordially invite you to participate in a study conducted by Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) aimed at investigating the purchasing behaviour of Chinese tourists towards cultural souvenirs.

We wanted to confirm with you that you are Chinese.

Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary. If you feel that the study is intrusive or you are reluctant to answer certain questions, you are able to withdraw at any stage of the questionnaire. The questionnaire will take you approximately 15 minutes to complete. We appreciate your contribution to this research. All responses will be treated confidentially.

Please note that there are no right or wrong answers. A quick and honest response is generally the most useful.

Thank you for your participation.

If you have any queries about the questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact:

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Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

Email: 22010065@siswa.unimas.my

Mobile: +60 179760828(Malaysia)

+86 13566227742(China)

Screening questions:

Have you ever travelled? (Domestic travel)

- Yes No

SECTION A. ABOUT YOURSELF

Please tick (✓) your choices related to your visit.

A1. Please indicate your age group.

- Under 18 18 – 25 26 – 34
 35 – 49 50 – 55 56 and above

A2. Please indicate your gender.

- Male Female

A3. Please indicate your monthly income range.

- Less than RMB 3,500 RMB 3,501 - 4,000
 RMB 4,001 - 6,000 RMB 6,001 - 8,000
 RMB 8,001 - 12,000 More than RMB 12,000

A4. Please indicate your highest level of education.

- High School or below Associate Degree Bachelor Degree
 Master Degree Doctoral Degree or above

A5. Please indicate your current occupational group.

- Student Civil servants/state enterprise employees Business owner
 Retiree Housewife / husband Peasantry
 Private employees Other (pls specify):

SECTION B. ABOUT YOUR CURRENT VISIT

Please tick (✓) your choices relate to your visit.

B1. What is your main purpose for visiting the destination? (Please tick only one box)

- Vacation/leisure Business/Work Shopping
 Visiting friends and relatives Cultural event Family/Family activities

		1	2	3	4	5
1	The design of souvenirs should focus on improving the user's comfort.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I prefer to choose souvenirs that are durable and easy to clean.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	When choosing souvenirs, I give priority to whether they are easy to carry and store.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Souvenirs should be designed to take into account various environmental factors commonly encountered during travel, such as climate and terrain.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I believe that traveler-friendly souvenir design features (such as reduced burden and increased comfort) can make travel more enjoyable and smooth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C2. The importance of “**Aesthetic**” related content to you.

No	Aesthetic	Very Unimportant			Very Important	
		1	2	3	4	5
1	The souvenir should be designed with an attractive appearance that makes it visually striking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Attractive colors can significantly enhance the appeal of souvenirs and make me more willing to buy them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	The graphics or images on the souvenir should accurately reflect the local culture and artistic characteristics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I prefer those souvenirs that are well-crafted and of high quality, especially those that show a high level of skill in the details and materials.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Souvenirs should be designed to reflect the cultural values and traditions of the area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	The shape design of the souvenir should be creative and fit with the local cultural background.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C3. The “**Unique**” related content to you.

No	Unique	Very Unimportant			Very Important	
		1	2	3	4	5
1	For me, a souvenir is a good gift.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2	Souvenirs made by famous artisans or made with local materials can increase their appeal and value.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Souvenirs with the signature of the craft producer, logo or the name/logo of the place visited can make the gift more memorable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I prefer to choose unique or limited edition souvenirs because they are more unique and collectible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I think souvenirs with innovative elements of digital technology are more attractive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	A good souvenir should have clever design and creativity to make it stand out from the many products.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	I prefer souvenirs that reflect the culture or traditions of a particular place because they have more personal meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION D. ABOUT YOUR SOUVENIR PURCHASE INTENTION

Please tick (√) to select with your rating.

Listed below are the following statements of the perception of the purchase intention of the culture souvenirs. Please rate on a 5-point Likert Scale, from 1 =Strongly Disagree to 5 =Strongly Agree, according to how much you agree with each statement.

D1. Degree of agreement about the statement of “purchase motivation”

No	Purchase Motive	Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	I buy cultural souvenirs to remember the good times of my travels.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Buying cultural souvenirs makes me feel closer to the local culture and history.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I like to buy cultural souvenirs as gifts for my friends and family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I buy cultural souvenirs to show my love and identification with a certain place or culture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5	Buying cultural souvenirs allows me to recall my travel experiences in the future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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D2. Degree of agreement about the statement of “purchase attitude”

No	Purchase Attitude	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree				
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	I think cultural souvenirs are a meaningful consumption	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I think the price of cultural souvenirs usually reflects their cultural value.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	When buying cultural souvenirs, I pay more attention to the cultural connotation behind them rather than the appearance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I believe that buying cultural souvenirs can help support local artists and craftspeople.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	In my opinion, cultural souvenirs are an important carrier to reflect the unique charm of a place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D3. Degree of agreement about the statement of “Purchase behaviour”

No	Purchase Behaviour	Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree				
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	When I travel, I usually buy cultural souvenirs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I am willing to pay a higher price for souvenirs with unique cultural value.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	When I buy cultural souvenirs, I prefer to choose products with local characteristics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I often buy cultural souvenirs through online platforms rather than just relying on physical stores.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I will decide whether to buy the souvenir based on its quality and cultural value, not just the price.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D4. Do you fill in this questionnaire carefully?

Yes No

SECTION E. ABOUT YOUR PERCEPTION OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF CULTURAL SOUVENIRS

Please tick (√) to select with your rating.

Listed below are the following statements of the perception of the authenticity of cultural souvenirs, please rate on a 5-point Likert Scale, from 1 =Strongly Disagree to 5 =Strongly Agree, according to how much you agree with each statement.

E1. Degree of agreement about the statement of "Authenticity cognition of cultural souvenirs"

No	Authenticity cognition of cultural souvenirs	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5
1	In my opinion, the authenticity of cultural souvenirs is an important criterion to evaluate their value.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	The authenticity of cultural souvenirs directly affects how much I like them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I think authentic cultural souvenirs can better convey local history and culture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I believe souvenirs with cultural background and stories are more meaningful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	The authenticity of cultural souvenirs enhances my identity with the culture of the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

E2. Degree of agreement about the statement of "Purchase Behaviour and authenticity"

No	Purchase Behaviour and authenticity	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5
1	When buying cultural souvenirs, I pay special attention to whether it has an authentic cultural background.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I am willing to pay more for cultural souvenirs with authenticity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I prefer to buy souvenirs made by local artisans with cultural heritage rather than industrially produced goods.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	When I buy a cultural souvenir, I actively ask about its origin and how it was made.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5	I usually buy cultural souvenirs through reliable stores or reputable outlets to ensure their authenticity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	---	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

E3. Degree of agreement about the statement of "Attitudes towards imitations"

No	Attitudes towards imitations	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
		1	2	3	4	5
1	If I know that a souvenir is an imitation, I will be less interested in buying it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I don't think imitations can represent the real culture and traditions of the place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I prefer to buy authentic souvenirs rather than cheap imitations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	For me, imitations often lack Unique and cultural value.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Even if the price of imitation is lower, I still prefer to pay more for authentic cultural souvenirs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION F. OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

F1. What qualities are you looking for in a cultural souvenir?

F2. Do you have any suggestions on how the cultural souvenirs can be improved to attract more tourists?

Questionnaire Chinese version

中国游客文化纪念品购买行为调查

尊敬的参与者：
马来西亚沙捞越大学 (UNIMAS) 应用与创意艺术学院诚挚邀请您参与一项关于中国游客文化纪念品购买行为的学术研究。您的见解将为跨文化消费研究提供重要参考。

参与条件
本研究对象为中华人民共和国公民。若您符合条件，欢迎自愿参与

说明事项：
您可随时退出问卷填写，无需任何解释
所有数据仅用于学术研究，个人信息将匿名处理
答案无对错之分，请根据真实体验作答
预计耗时约15分钟

如有疑问或需进一步信息，请联系：
负责人：金小琳 (Lina)
单位：Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts; Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)
邮箱：22010065@siswa.unimas.my
电话：马来西亚：+60 17-976 0828；中国：+86 135-6622-7742
感谢您对社会科学的支持！

*你曾经旅行过吗?(国内旅游)

- A.是
 B.否

*模块B: 关于您的旅行

B1. 您访问该目的地的主要目的是什么？(仅勾选一项)

- 休闲放松
 商务/工作
 购物
 探亲访友
 探索新文化
 家庭/亲子活动
 社交需求
 其他
 无目的

*B2.你旅行时通常在哪里买纪念品?

- 游客商店
 当地市场
 博物馆或文化中心
 机场店
 商场
 网店
 不购买

*模块A: 个人相关信息

A1. 请选择您的年龄组

- 小于 18
 18 - 25
 26 - 34
 35 - 49
 50 - 55
 大于等于56

*A2.请注明您的性别

- 男
 女

*A3. 请注明您的月总收入区间

- 小于3,500元
 3,501 - 4,000元
 4,001 - 6,000元
 6,001 - 8,000元
 8,001 - 12,000元
 大于12,000元

*B3. 您在最近一次的旅行中购买了以下哪些类别的纪念品？(您可以选择多个选项)。
[Multiple]

- 饰品
 珠宝
 收藏品
 文具
 艺术品/画作
 古董
 玩具
 本地特色食品
 工艺品
 服装
 书
 明信片/小册子
 没有购买

*B4. 是什么促使你购买文化纪念品？(可多项)

- 个人纪念品/记住这次旅行
 了解更多的文化
 作为送给家人或朋友的礼物
 作为收藏品
 用于装饰或家庭使用
 支持当地社区
 不购买
 其他 (请注明):

*A4. 请注明你的最高学历

- 高中
 大专
 学士
 硕士
 博士

*A5. 请注明您目前的职业类别

- 学生
 公务员/国有企业职工
 家庭主妇/丈夫
 退休人员
 企业主
 农民
 私营企业职工
 其他 (请注明):

*B5. 您最喜欢用什么材料制成的纪念品？(仅勾选一项)

- 木材
 天然材料
 织物
 玻璃
 纱线或纤维
 粘土
 皮革
 涂料/油漆
 金属
 不在乎材质

*B6.您对旅行满意吗？(1= 很不满意, 5= 很满意)

- 很不满意 很满意
- ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Questionnaire Chinese version

*模块C: 关于纪念品设计特征

以下是购买纪念品时使用的设计特征标准, 请用李克特5分量表 (1=不重要, 5=非常重要), 给每一个选项在您心目中的重要性打分

C1. “护理与旅行”特征相关内容对您的重要性

非常不重要	不重要	一般重要	重要	非常重要
纪念品的设计应该注重提高使用者的舒适感				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我更倾向于选择耐用且易于清洁的纪念品				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
在选择纪念品时, 我会优先考虑它们是否方便携带和收纳				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
纪念品的设计应该考虑到旅行中常遇到的各种环境因素, 如气候和地形				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我认为关爱旅行者的纪念品设计特征 (如减轻负担、提升舒适度) 能够让旅行更加愉快和顺利				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*C2. “审美”特征 相关内容对您的重要性

非常不重要	不重要	一般重要	重要	非常重要
纪念品的设计应该具有吸引人的外观, 使其在视觉上引人注目				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
吸引人的颜色能够显著提升纪念品的吸引力, 并让我更愿意购买				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
纪念品上的图形或图像应能准确反映当地的文化和艺术特色				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我更喜欢那些工艺精湛、质量高的纪念品, 尤其是在细节和材料上体现出高水平的技术				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
纪念品的设计应该能够体现出该地区的文化价值和传统				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
纪念品的形状设计应该具有创意, 并与当地的文化背景相契合				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*C3. “独特”特征 相关内容对您的重要性

非常不重要	不重要	一般重要	重要	非常重要
对我来说, 纪念品是一份好的礼物				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
由著名工匠制作或采用当地材料制作的纪念品, 更能增加其吸引力和价值				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
纪念品上有工艺生产者的签名、标志或参观地点的名称/标志, 能让礼物显得更有纪念意义				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我更倾向于选择独一无二或限量版的纪念品, 因为它们更具独特性和收藏价值				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我认为具有数字技术创新元素的纪念品更具吸引力				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
一份好的纪念品应该具备巧妙的设计和创意, 使其在众多商品中脱颖而出				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我更喜欢那些能够体现特定地方文化或传统的纪念品, 因为它们更具个人意义				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*模块D: 关于纪念品购买决策

以下是对文化纪念品购买意向的陈述, 请根据你对每个陈述的同意程度, 用李克特5分量表 (1=非常不同意, 5=非常同意) 给每一个选项打分

D1. 购买动机

非常不同意	不同意	中立	同意	非常同意
我购买文化纪念品是为了回忆旅行中的美好时光				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
购买文化纪念品让我感觉自己更接近当地的文化和历史				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我喜欢购买文化纪念品作为送给亲朋好友的礼物				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我购买文化纪念品是为了展示自己对某个地方或文化的喜爱和认同				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
购买文化纪念品能让我在未来回忆起自己的旅行经历				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire Chinese version

*D2. 购买态度

非常不同意	不同意	中立	同意	非常同意
我认为文化纪念品是一种有意义的消费				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我觉得文化纪念品的价格通常反映了其文化价值				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
购买文化纪念品时，我更看重其背后的文化内涵，而非外观				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我相信购买文化纪念品可以帮助支持当地艺术家和手工艺人				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我认为文化纪念品是体现一个地方独特魅力的重要载体				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*D3. 购买行为

非常不同意	不同意	中立	同意	非常同意
在旅行时，我通常会购买文化纪念品				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我愿意为具有独特文化价值的纪念品支付较高的价格				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我购买文化纪念品时，更倾向于选择具有地方特色的商品				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我常常通过网上平台购买文化纪念品，而不仅仅依赖于实体店				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我会根据纪念品的质量和文化价值来决定是否购买，而不仅仅看价格				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*模块E: 关于你对文化纪念品真实性的看法

以下是对文化纪念品真实性看法的陈述，请根据你对每个陈述的同意程度，用李克特5分量表（1=非常不同意，5=非常同意）给每一个选项打分

E1. 文化纪念品的真实性认知

非常不同意	不同意	中立	同意	非常同意
我认为文化纪念品的真实性是评估其价值的重要标准				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
文化纪念品的真实性直接影响我对它的喜爱程度				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我认为正宗的文化纪念品能够更好地传达当地的历史和文化				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我相信具有文化背景和故事的纪念品更加有意义				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
文化纪念品的真实性能增强我对该地区文化的认同感				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*E2. 购买行为与真实性

非常不同意	不同意	中立	同意	非常同意
在购买文化纪念品时，我会特别关注它是否具有正宗的文化背景				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我愿意为具有真实性的文化纪念品支付更高的价格				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我更愿意购买当地手艺人制作的、具有文化传承的纪念品，而不是工业化大规模生产的商品				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
当我购买文化纪念品时，我会主动询问它的来源和制作过程				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我通常会通过可靠的商店或知名渠道购买文化纪念品，以确保其真实性				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Questionnaire Chinese version

*E3. 对仿制品的态度

非常不同意	不同意	中立	同意	非常同意
如果我知道某个纪念品是仿制品，我会对它的购买兴趣减少				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我认为仿制品不能代表当地真正的文化和传统				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
我更倾向于购买正宗的纪念品，而非便宜的仿制品				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
对我来说，仿制品通常缺乏独特性和文化价值				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
即使仿制品价格较低，我依然更愿意花更多的钱购买正宗的文化纪念品				
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*E4. 你认真填写这份问卷了吗？

<input type="radio"/> 是
<input type="radio"/> 否

*模块F: 开放式问答

F1. 你想要什么样的文化纪念品？

*F2. 你对如何改善文化纪念品设计以吸引更多游客有什么建议吗？

Submit

Appendix K: Scale Items

Table 1: Scale Items for design features

#	Item description and supporting literature
Kusdibyo (2015)	
1	Appealing colours
2	Attractive design
3	Workmanship or techniques of high quality
4	Can be displayed in the home
5	Price not expensive
6	Makes a good gift
7	Unique or one-of-a-kind
8	Clever idea
9	Useable and wearable
10	Fits into a collection
11	Easy to pack or carry on a trip
12	Easy to care
13	Name or logo of place visiting
14	Made by well-known craftsperson
15	Craft producer's signature or symbol
16	Portability
17	Fragility
18	Authentic
19	Innovative
20	Reflects cultural values
21	Pictorial image
Littrell et al. (1993) – (Adapted from Anderson & Littrell, 1995; Kim & Littrell, 2001; Littrell et al., 1994; Revilla & Godd, 2003)	
22	Product Unique
23	Cultural and historical integrity
24	Esthetics
25	Quality of workmanship
26	The artist's connection to the product, having produced it with his or her own hands

27	Being able to watch the artisan in his or her creative element
28	The craft's utilitarian function
29	Local production
30	Cost
31	Scarcity value
32	A guarantee of authenticity by way of a label or certificate
Swanson & Timothy (2012)	
33	Adopt traditional technology
34	Use local materials and produce locally
35	Provide authentic cultural experiences
36	Reflect destination characteristics
Soukhamvong & Park (2019)	
37	Location and cultural reflection
38	Use of natural materials
39	Traditional equipment and manual processing

Table 2: Questionnaire Scale Design Reference

First-level Indicator	Second-level Indicator	Third-level Indicator	Fourth-level Indicator	Specific Design Features	References
Tourists' Purchasing Determinants of Cultural Based Souvenir Product Design in China.	Design Features	Care and Travel	The design of souvenirs should focus on improving the user's comfort.	Comfortable design	Kim & Littrell (1999, 2001); Baker et al. (2002); Swanson & Horridge (2006); Vasheghani-Farahani et al. (2014); Liu et al. (2014); Amaro et al. (2020a); Li & Cai (2024); Haldrup (2017); Turner & Reisinger (2001)
			I prefer to choose souvenirs that are durable and easy to clean.	Durability and easy maintenance	
			When choosing souvenirs, I give priority to whether they are easy to carry and store.	Portability	
			Souvenirs should be designed to take into account various environmental factors commonly encountered during travel, such as climate and terrain.	Environmental adaptability	
			I believe that traveler-friendly souvenir design features (such as reduced burden and increased comfort) can make travel more enjoyable and smooth.	Travel-friendly	
		Aesthetic	The souvenir should be designed with an attractive appearance that makes it visually striking.	Visual appeal	Littrell et al. (1994); Hu & Yu (2007); Vasheghani-Farahani et al. (2014); Peng & Shi (2018); Qiu et al. (2024); Cheng (2024);
			Attractive colors can significantly enhance the appeal of souvenirs and make me more willing to buy them.	Color expression	

			The graphics or images on the souvenir should accurately reflect the local culture and artistic characteristics.	Cultural symbol accuracy	Du & Zhang (2017); Kim & Littrell (2001); Swanson & Horridge (2002,2004); Ming & Guo (2020).
			I prefer those souvenirs that are well-crafted and of high quality, especially those that show a high level of skill in the details and materials.	Craftsmanship and material refinement	
			Souvenirs should be designed to reflect the cultural values and traditions of the area.	Expression of traditional values	
			The shape design of the souvenir should be creative and fit with the local cultural background.	Creative design	
	Unique		For me, a souvenir is a good gift.	Gift attributes	McLeod (1976); Park (2000); Swanson & Horridge (2002, 2004); Olalere (2017); Li & Cai (2008); Sthapit (2018); Zeng (2019); Sun (2019); Wang (2021) ;Ma (2024); Mantas et al. (2021); Go & Kang (2023).
			Souvenirs made by famous artisans or made with local materials can increase their appeal and value.	Artisan or local material endorsement	
			Souvenirs with the signature of the craft producer, logo or the name/logo of the place visited can make the gift more memorable.	Identity identification	
			I prefer to choose unique or limited edition souvenirs because they are more unique and collectible.	Limited quantity and collectibility	
			I think souvenirs with innovative elements of digital technology are more attractive.	Digital technology integration	
			A good souvenir should have clever design and creativity to make it stand out from the many products.	Creative differentiation	

			I prefer souvenirs that reflect the culture or traditions of a particular place because they have more personal meaning.	Cultural tradition mapping	
Purchase Intention	Purchase Motive		I buy cultural souvenirs to remember the good times of my travels.		Swanson & Horridge (2006); Correia et al. (2013); Prebensen & Foss (2011); Wilkins (2011); Zhang et al. (2016); Peyer et al. (2017); Fangxuan & Ryan (2018); Chen & Tung (2014).
			Buying cultural souvenirs makes me feel closer to the local culture and history.		
			I like to buy cultural souvenirs as gifts for my friends and family.		
			I buy cultural souvenirs to show my love and identification with a certain place or culture.		
			Buying cultural souvenirs allows me to recall my travel experiences in the future.		
	Purchase Attitude		I think cultural souvenirs are a meaningful consumption		Duan (2023); Peyer et al. (2017); Dou (2020); Huang et al. (2024); Zabulis et al. (2020); Kurlinkus (2014); Soukhamvong & Park (2018); Liang & Qi (2021).
			I think the price of cultural souvenirs usually reflects their cultural value.		
			When buying cultural souvenirs, I pay more attention to the cultural connotation behind them rather than the appearance.		
			I believe that buying cultural souvenirs can help support local artists and craftspeople.		
			In my opinion, cultural souvenirs are an important carrier to reflect the unique charm of a place.		
		When I travel, I usually buy cultural souvenirs			

	Purchase Behaviour		I am willing to pay a higher price for souvenirs with unique cultural value.		Petersen (2009); Park & Reisinger (2009); Prayag et al. (2015); Guo et al. (2007); Peyer et al. (2017); Duan (2023); Shen & Lai (2022).	
			When I buy cultural souvenirs, I prefer to choose products with local characteristics.			
			I often buy cultural souvenirs through online platforms rather than just relying on physical stores.			
			I will decide whether to buy the souvenir based on its quality and cultural value, not just the price.			
	Authenticity Of Cultural Souvenirs	Authenticity Cognition of Cultural Souvenirs		In my opinion, the authenticity of cultural souvenirs is an important criterion to evaluate their value.		Goeldenera & Ritchie (2007); Zulaikha & Brereton (2011); Brida et al.(2013); TRILLING (2009); Wang (1999); Revilla & Godd (2003); Swanson & Timothy (2012); Dai (2018); Soukhamvong & Park (2019).
				The authenticity of cultural souvenirs directly affects how much I like them.		
				I think authentic cultural souvenirs can better convey local history and culture.		
				I believe souvenirs with cultural background and stories are more meaningful.		
				The authenticity of cultural souvenirs enhances my identity with the culture of the region.		
		Purchase Behaviour and		When buying cultural souvenirs, I pay special attention to whether it has an authentic cultural background.		Goeldener & Ritchie (2007); Zulaikha & Brereton (2011);

	Authenticity	I am willing to pay more for cultural souvenirs with authenticity.		Bridaet al. (2013); TRILLING (2009); Wang (1999); Revilla & Godd (2003); Dai (2018); Swanson & Timothy (2012).
		I prefer to buy souvenirs made by local artisans with cultural heritage rather than industrially produced goods.		
		When I buy a cultural souvenir, I actively ask about its origin and how it was made.		
		I usually buy cultural souvenirs through reliable stores or reputable outlets to ensure their authenticity.		
	Attitudes Towards Imitations	If I know that a souvenir is an imitation, I will be less interested in buying it.		Littrell et al. (1993); Cave et al. (2007); Liu & Yao (2018); Yeoman et al. (2007); Anastasiadou & Vettese (2019); Liu & Yuan (2024); Su et al. (2024); Guo et al. (2024); Wall (2024); Sthapit et al. (2024).
		I don't think imitations can represent the real culture and traditions of the place		
		I prefer to buy authentic souvenirs rather than cheap imitations.		
		For me, imitations often lack Unique and cultural value.		
		Even if the price of imitation is lower, I still prefer to pay more for authentic cultural souvenirs.		

Appendix L: Summary of Previous Studies in Shopping Tourism or Souvenir Shopping Tourism

Table 1: Summary of Shopping Tourism or Souvenir Shopping Tourism in Western Countries

Researcher and Country of Study	Aims/Objectives	Methodology	Findings
Littrell et al (1994) USA	To develop profiles of tourists based on their souvenir buying and preferred travel activities. With particular focus on craft souvenirs.	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Mail questionnaire survey</p> <p>Scales: A five-point Likert scale and a seven-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: PCA and ANOVA</p> <p>Sample: Local tourists (N = 1,370)</p>	The findings indicated that four distinct and integrated patterns of behaviour emerged related to tourists’ preferences for travel activities, souvenir products, and shopping. Those four profiles are: ethnic, arts, and people profile; history and parks profile; urban entertainment profile; and active outdoor profile. Results provide support for the hypotheses that souvenir buying and tourism styles are associated.
Swanson & Horridge (2002) USA	To determine retailers’ awareness of tourists’ souvenir purchase behaviour and to provide guidelines for retailers concerning the souvenir purchase behaviour of tourists in the South-western US.	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey</p> <p>Scales: A five-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: Chi-square Automatic Interaction Detection (CHAID) method.</p> <p>Sample: Local tourists (N = 398) and retailers (N = 307).</p>	The results showed that retailers are aware of the souvenir purchase behaviour of tourists when concern is given to souvenir variety, merchandise assortment factors, and store attributes. Additionally, tourists wished to encourage retailers to (a) sell souvenir assortments that include local foods and fine jewellery (b) consider souvenir selection factors such as the craftsman’s reputation and the motif or design of place visited, and (c) not focus on store site in a high pedestrian traffic area.

<p>Swanson & Horridge (2004)</p> <p>USA</p>	<p>To test the causal relationships between tourist travel motivations (travel activities and tourist demographics) and souvenir consumption (souvenir products, product attributes, and store attributes).</p>	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey</p> <p>Scales: A five-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: SEM</p> <p>Sample: Local tourists (N = 398)</p>	<p>It is found that tourist activities are positively correlated with souvenir consumption, while tourist demographics are not. Therefore, retailers should identify the tourist activities of tourists in order to offer an attractive portfolio of souvenir products and sell them in an attractive environment. By identifying tourism activities, retailers can partner with accommodation facilities, restaurants and tourism bureaus to provide a positive shopping experience for visitors.</p>
<p>Swanson & Horridge (2006)</p> <p>USA</p>	<p>To analyse what travel motivations influence the type of souvenirs tourists purchase, attributes of the souvenir, and attributes of the store where the souvenir is purchased.</p>	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey</p> <p>Scales: A five-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: SEM</p> <p>Sample: Local tourists (N = 398)</p>	<p>The results indicated that travel motivations have an influence on souvenir products, product attributes, and store attributes. Retailers within the souvenir trade should be aware of tourists' travel motivations and offer a souvenir mix that has appealing attributes in an appealing store environment based on these motivations. In this way, retailers can provide a pleasurable and profitable selling environment, benefiting the tourist and the economy of the tourist destination.</p>
<p>Hu & Yu (2007)</p> <p>USA</p>	<p>To investigate tourists' shopping-related beliefs and behaviours relating to craft souvenirs.</p>	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey</p> <p>Scales: A seven-point Likert scale</p>	<p>The findings indicated that tourism shoppers can be segmented by their craft selection criteria and shopping involvement. Three distinct groups of shoppers are formed: enthusiasts, shopping lovers, and indifferent shoppers. These groups are evaluated by a</p>

		<p>Statistical method: Cluster analysis, Appendix ANOVA</p> <p>Sample: International tourists (N = 271)</p>	<p>heuristic approach of market segmentation assessment.</p>
<p>Fairhurst, Costello & Holmes (2007)</p> <p>USA</p>	<p>To determine tourist typologies and if differences exist with souvenir purchases, sources of information used by tourists to select a place to shop, and shopping behaviour.</p>	<p>Research design: Qualitative and quantitative methods</p> <p>Data collection method: Focus group and mail questionnaire survey</p> <p>Scales: A five-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: Factor analysis</p> <p>Sample: Local tourists (N = 540)</p>	<p>The results indicated that tourists to Tennessee can be grouped into five categories: City, Historical, Active, Alone, and Tour Groups. Additionally, City individuals spent the most time and money shopping, while Active individuals spent the least amount of time. A word-of-mouth recommendation from family or friends was the most important factor in choosing where to shop. Crafts, maps, and books from the area were important to buy. Tourist styles may assist marketers in determining what souvenirs to offer.</p>
<p>Wilkins (2011)</p> <p>Australia</p>	<p>The study aims to explore motivations for souvenir purchases, analyse the influence of gender on souvenir purchases and their motivations, assess tourists' souvenir buying behaviour, and determine the primary importance of souvenirs as proof of experiences, memory triggers, and gifts.</p>	<p>Research design: Sequential mixed method</p> <p>Data collection method: Focus group and Online questionnaire survey</p> <p>Scales: A seven-point Likert scale and a five-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: PCA, MANOVA</p> <p>Sample: International and local university students (N = 3,231)</p>	<p>Research shows that men are more likely to buy discounted and branded items, while women are more likely to buy other categories of souvenirs, especially destination-specific products. Tourists are more likely to buy souvenirs that reflect or represent the area, rather than more generic items. The role of souvenirs as gifts is more important, and the support of women is stronger. Most consumers buy souvenirs to give to others. Souvenirs are also very important as evidence of a visitor's</p>

			experience and a means of sharing it with others.
Alegre & Cladera (2012) Mallorca, Spain	To examine tourist and travel-related characteristics and tourist motivations in relation to propensity to shop and the amount of expenditure.	Research design: Quantitative method Data collection method: Interview questionnaire survey with random sampling technique Scales: A five-point Likert scale Statistical method: PCA Sample: German and British tourists (N = 2,027)	The findings indicated that tourists' motivations and travel-related characteristics were related to the decision whether or not participate in shopping and with level of shopping expenditure.
Kinley, Forney & Kim (2012) US	To examine travel motivation as a predictor of the importance assigned to desired shopping centre attributes for three different shopping centres, and their effect on satisfaction, and re-patronage intention.	Research design: Quantitative method Data collection method: Questionnaire survey by mall-intercept survey technique Scales: A five-point Likert scale Statistical method: PCA Sample: Domestic tourist (N = 624)	The results indicated that desired shopping centre attributes are influenced by travel motivation. Additionally, overall satisfaction and re-patronage intention.
Barutçu, Doğan & Üngüren (2011) Alanya, Turkey	To examine the differences between and among international tourist shoppers in shopping satisfaction.	Research design: Quantitative method Data collection method: Questionnaire survey Scales: A five-point Likert scale Statistical method: One way ANOVA Sample: International tourists (N = 1,937)	The results indicated that tourists' satisfaction and perception of shopping in Alanya significantly differed between the nations.
Murphy et al. (2011)	To examine the phenomenon of Tourist Shopping Villages	Research design: Quantitative method	The results indicated that the village's performance on providing a unique local

Hahndorf Adelaide, Australia	(TSVs) and the dimensions that contribute to satisfying visitor experiences.	<p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey</p> <p>Scales: A seven-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: One way ANOVA, factor analysis</p> <p>Sample: Tourist shoppers (N = 506)</p>	experience, value for money, and regionally distinctive products, and opportunities for entertainment and bargain hunting were the key variables most strongly predicted whether respondents were very satisfied.
Park & Reisinger (2009) South Florida, US	To examine the differences in shopping for luxury goods between Western, Asian, and Hispanic tourists and the perceived importance of different types and characteristics of the luxury consumer and travel goods tourists buy on holiday.	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey with non-random sampling</p> <p>Scales: A five-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: MANOVA, T-test, ANOVA</p> <p>Sample: Visitors (N = 275)</p>	The results show that Western, Asian, and Hispanic tourist-shoppers significantly differ in the perceived importance of luxury consumer and travel goods and their characteristics. Western and Asian tourists attach more importance to buying 'gifts for others' than Hispanic tourists. Western tourists attach more importance to 'fine dining' than Hispanic tourists.
Dmitrovic & Vida (2007) Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro	To examine tourist motivations for shopping overseas and explore the role of demographic versus socio-psychological factors in explaining the phenomenon of cross-border shopping.	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey by personal interview</p> <p>Scales: A five-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: Discriminant analysis</p> <p>Sample: Domestic and international consumers (N = 1,762)</p>	The results indicated that cross-border out shoppers and domestic in-shoppers in the two countries confirmed the unstable effect of demographic variables on out-shopping behaviour.
LeHew & Wesley (2007)	To examine the attractiveness of tourist shopper segments of shopping centres and explore	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey by mall-intercept technique</p>	The results indicated that the tourist shopper market may not be the most valuable customer group. Resident shoppers of

US	shopping satisfaction of tourist and resident shoppers.	<p>Scales: A five-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: T-test, Correlation analysis</p> <p>Sample: International tourist (N = 575)</p>	tourist-focused shopping centres are more satisfied than tourist shoppers.
Tosun et al. (2007) Cappadocia, Turkey	To examine tourists' perceived satisfaction with local shopping culture, staff service quality, product value and reliability, physical features of shops, payment methods, and other shopping and shop attributes with special reference to the region of Cappadocia, Turkey.	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey with face-to-face interview</p> <p>Scales: A five-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: Descriptive statistics</p> <p>Sample: International guided tourists (N = 384)</p>	The results indicated that respondents have different satisfaction levels with various attributes of shops and shopping.
Rosenbaum & Spears (2006) Hawaii, US	To examine Japanese and US tourists visiting Hawaii for their propensity to shop at high-end and discounted retail stores and examine tourists planned behaviour on shopping, dining and other recreational activities.	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey with random sampling technique</p> <p>Scales: A five-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: MANOVA, ANOVA</p> <p>Sample: Japanese and American tourists (N = 164)</p>	The results indicated that Japanese tourists engage in duty-free shopping as their main plan, while cultural activities were the focus of American tourists travelling to Hawaii. Additionally, Japanese tourists may be categorised into shopping enthusiasts and non-shopper groups. Shopping enthusiasts patronise duty-free stores, factory outlets, and designer boutiques.
Rosenbaum & Spears (2006) Honolulu, Hawaii, US	To explore demographic, motivation, and consumption behaviours among Japanese tourists during Golden Week.	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey with convenience sampling technique</p>	Japanese tourists spend about \$900 on gifts during their stay. This dollar figure is nearly \$300 more than average spending among non-Golden Week tourists. In addition, Golden Week tourists are employed, well-

		<p>Statistical method: Pearson correlation, ANOVA, MANOVA</p> <p>Sample: Japanese tourists (N = 200)</p>	<p>educated, and primarily interested in holiday and leisure activities.</p>
<p>Josiam, Kinley & Kim (2005)</p> <p>US</p>	<p>To examine the interplay of tourists' shopping involvement with demographics, push motivators, pull motivators, shoppertourist cluster typologies, and the amount of time and money spent shopping while on a trip.</p>	<p>Research design: Mixed method</p> <p>Data collection method: Focus group interview and questionnaire survey</p> <p>Scales: A 10-item bipolar scale and a five-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: Factor analysis, ANOVA, Regression analysis</p> <p>Sample: Two focus group interviews with nine members for each group and domestic tourists (N = 485)</p>	<p>The results indicated that tourists can be segmented into high-, medium-, or low-involvement tourist shoppers. Involvement levels were consistently associated with both push and pull factors in a hierarchical manner. However, involvement was not found to be a predictor of time or money spent on shopping while on a trip.</p>
<p>Moscardo (2004)</p> <p>Queensland, Australia</p>	<p>To explore the effectiveness of age, gender and trip typology as predictor variables for tourists' shopping behaviours. Shopping behaviours are examined by tourists' actual involvement in five different categories of 'shop or browse' activities.</p>	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey with interview technique</p> <p>Scales: A four-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: Factor analysis and one-way ANOVA</p> <p>Sample: International and domestic tourists (N = 1,630)</p>	<p>The findings showed that four types of shoppers were identified based on a mixture of the importance of shopping in destination choice and actual participation in shopping activities. These four groups were compared and profiled on a series of socio-demographic, travel behaviour, destination choice, activity participation and attraction visitation variables.</p>
<p>Kinley, Josiam & Kim (2003) US</p>	<p>To examine the motivations of tourist shoppers and the attractions of shopping centres to tourists, and the perception</p>	<p>Research design: Mixed method (Quantitative method and focus group)</p> <p>Data collection method: Telephone survey and interview</p>	<p>The results indicated that tourist shoppers can be segmented into 'Shopping tourists' motivated by shopping related issues, 'Experiential Tourists' motivated by the social/entertainment experience of</p>

	between tourist shoppers and shopping centre operators.	<p>Scales: A five-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: ANOVA, factor analysis, cluster analysis</p> <p>Sample: Tourist shoppers (N = 485) and shopping centre management personnel (N = 50)</p>	shopping, and ‘Passive Tourists’ with low overall push or motivation to shop. Shopping centre personnel attributed greater importance to ‘fair/events’, ‘close to hotel’, ‘enclosed mall’, while tourist shoppers attributed greater importance to ‘reflective of local culture’ and ‘unique architecture/buildings’.
Mawufemor, K., Eshun, G., & Tichaawa, T. M. (2019). Ghana	<p>Research to promote the role of souvenirs in the tourism experience in Ghana</p> <p>Explore the effects of accessibility, shopping environment, tourism features and souvenir features on tourists' souvenir selection</p>	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey</p> <p>Scales: A three-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: Descriptive statistics and factor analyses (principal component analysis)</p> <p>Sample: International tourists (N = 196)</p>	Provides memorabilia decision component. The accessibility of shopping places is the most important.

Table L2: Summary of Shopping Tourism or Souvenir Shopping Tourism in Asian Countries

Researcher and country of study	Aims/objectives	Methodology	Findings
Chang & Kong (2012) Macau (China)	To examine how souvenir shopping can be employed in Macau’s tourism portfolio and suggest ways to market souvenir products to various tourist segments.	<p>Research design: Quantitative method</p> <p>Data collection method: Questionnaire survey</p> <p>Scales: A five-point Likert scale</p> <p>Statistical method: Factor analysis</p>	The results demonstrate that souvenir products can be an integral part of the tourism portfolio and can be used to strengthen Macau’s tourism portfolio. This research offers tourism practitioners and academics a constructive approach to understanding the role of souvenirs in the

		Sample: International tourists (N = 414)	tourism industry and destination portfolio diversification.
Tsang, Tsai & Leung (2011) Hong Kong (China)	To determine tourists' perceptions of the importance of bargaining motivation, bargaining attitudes and types of behaviour, and to assess bargaining satisfaction, likelihood of revisiting, and likelihood of recommending the open-air market to others.	Research design: Quantitative method Data collection method: Questionnaire survey with non-probability quota sampling technique Scales: A five-point Likert scale Statistical method: Factor analysis, multiple regression Sample: International tourists (N = 203)	The results indicated that 'value for money' was the most important factor of tourists' bargaining intention. Additionally, two key bargaining attitudes and behaviour factors were identified, namely 'bargain for psychological well-being' and 'bargaining intensity'.
Perng, Chow & Liao (2010) Taiwan (China)	Consider passenger needs and study their reactions to retail products at Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport. The improved grey relational analysis method was used to determine the relationship between the shopping purpose and the priority of the satisfaction product category.	Research design: Quantitative method Data collection method: Questionnaire survey with convenience sampling Scales: A four-point Likert scale Statistical method: Grey relational analysis (GRA) Sample: Duty-free shopper tourists (N = 292)	The results indicated that tourists valued the utility and souvenir characteristics of products. The youngest respondents tended to shop in souvenir and café stores. Satisfaction analysis showed higher rankings for brand-name, utility, and low-cost products, and low satisfaction levels on the quality and price of café products.
Liu, Choi & Lee (2008) Hong Kong (China)	To study the shopping preferences of mainland Chinese tourists visiting Hong Kong under the Individual Visit Policy and identify the differences between their expected and actual	Research design: Quantitative method Data collection method: Questionnaire survey with interview Scales: A five-point Likert scale Statistical method: Paired t-test Sample: Chinese tourists (N = 137)	The results indicated a significant difference between the respondents' actual shopping satisfaction and their expectations for several factors, including product style, product diversity, awareness to tourists, store environment and decoration, visual merchandising, store lighting and music, and

	satisfaction with fashion retailers in Hong Kong.		store location. Tourist shopping preferences and spending patterns were identified.
Cao & Feng (2019) China	Based on investigation and analysis of consumer Behaviour characteristics This paper makes an empirical study on consumer cognition and purchase intention.	Research design: Quantitative method Data collection method: Questionnaire survey Scales: A five-point Likert scale Statistical method: Performance analysis Sample: Tourist (N = 92)	Awareness and willingness to buy are average Regional characteristics, beautiful appearance and exquisite craftsmanship are the main factors that affect the purchase intention.
Sawagvudcharee & Liu (2020) China	To study the purchasing intention of Chinese tourists for intangible cultural heritage souvenirs To investigate the influence of some antecedents on consumers' purchase intention of intangible cultural heritage souvenirs.	Research design: Quantitative method Data collection method: Questionnaire survey Scales: A five-point Likert scale Statistical method: factor analysis and SEM Sample: Chinese tourists (N = 400)	There is no direct or significant effect on customer perception of quality. Customer perceived value has an important impact Customer knowledge has the most significant impact
Liu et al. (2022) China	Taking blue printed cloth as an example, this paper discusses the changes of tourists' aesthetic judgment on tourism handicrafts under different background information.	Research design: Mixed method Data collection method: Field investigation, Case study, Questionnaire survey Scales: A five-point Likert scale Statistical method: Two-Way Repeated Measures ANOVA Sample: Chinese tourists (N = 133)	It reveals the heterogeneity of aesthetic judgment. People with different artistic interest levels have different aesthetic judgments The explanation of the production process heralds an increased appreciation of aesthetics

Appendix M: The Word Cloud

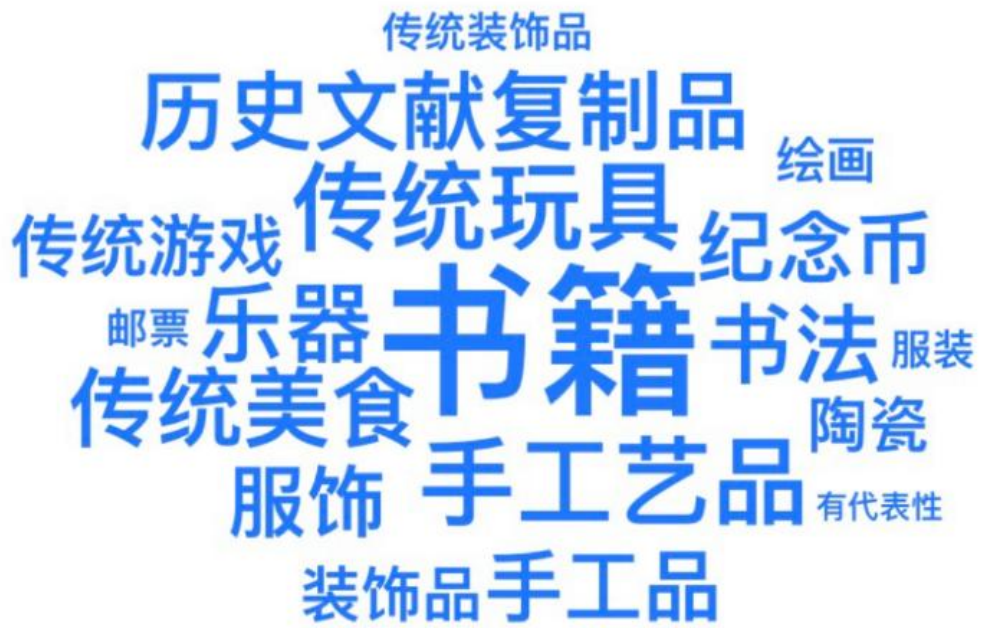


Figure 1: F1 question word cloud (Original version)



Figure 2: F1 question Word Cloud (Translated Version)

Appendix N: Design Features Affect Rankings

Table 1: Design Feature Satisfaction Ranking

Sorting	Code	Representative design features (Simplified keywords)	Mean
1	C33	Have Craft producer's signature or symbol/Name or logo of place visiting	3.3
2	C13	Easy to carry and store	3.298
3	C26	The shape design should be creative and fit with the local cultural context.	3.294
4	C37	Embody a particular local culture or tradition	3.29
5	C15	Traveler-friendly souvenir design features	3.287
6	C35	There are innovative elements of digital technology	3.285
7	C36	Clever design and idea	3.284
	C32	Made by well-known craftsman or Use local materials	3.284
8	C31	Makes a good gift	3.282
9	C21	It has an attractive appearance that makes it visually striking	3.277
10	C24	Workmanship or techniques of high quality	3.276
11	C25	Reflecting the cultural values and traditions of the region	3.274
12	C23	Graphics or images should accurately reflect local cultural and artistic characteristics	3.273
13	C34	Unique or limited edition	3.271
14	C11	Focus on improving user comfort	3.265
15	C12	Durable and easy to clean	3.256
16	C14	Take into account the various environmental factors commonly encountered during travel	3.247
17	C22	Attractive colors	3.242

Table 2: Design Features Affect Rankings

#	Code	Design Features	SPC
1	C1	The design of souvenirs should focus on improving the user's comfort.	0.95
2	U6	A good souvenir should have clever design and creativity to make it stand out from the many products.	0.808
3	A1	The souvenir should be designed with an attractive appearance that makes it visually striking.	0.807
4	A2	Attractive colors can significantly enhance the appeal of souvenirs and make me more willing to buy them.	0.804
5	C2	I prefer to choose souvenirs that are durable and easy to clean.	0.802
	C3	When choosing souvenirs, I give priority to whether they are easy to carry and store.	0.802
	U1	For me, a souvenir is a good gift.	0.802
6	C5	I believe that traveler-friendly souvenir design features (such as reduced burden and increased comfort) can make travel more enjoyable and smooth.	0.800
7	U5	I think souvenirs with innovative elements of digital technology are more attractive.	0.793
8	U7	I prefer souvenirs that reflect the culture or traditions of a particular place because they have more personal meaning.	0.792
	A6	The shape design of the souvenir should be creative and fit with the local cultural background.	0.792
9	U2	Souvenirs made by famous artisans or made with local materials can increase their appeal and value.	0.791
10	A4	I prefer those souvenirs that are well-crafted and of high quality, especially those that show a high level of skill in the details and materials.	0.79
11	C4	Souvenirs should be designed to take into account various environmental factors commonly encountered during travel, such as climate and terrain.	0.789
12	U3	Souvenirs with the signature of the craft producer, logo or the name/logo of the place visited can make the gift more memorable.	0.787
13	U4	I prefer to choose unique or limited edition souvenirs because they are more unique and collectible.	0.786
14	A5	Souvenirs should be designed to reflect the cultural values and traditions of the area.	0.782
15	A3	The graphics or images on the souvenir should accurately reflect the local culture and artistic characteristics.	0.769

Appendix O: Questionnaire Design - Age Stratification Basis

Age group	Core basis	Adaptability to China's national conditions	This research
<18	The Civil Code of the People's Republic of China stipulates that the legal adult standard is <18 years old	Minors' consumption Behaviour is highly dependent and their independent decision-making is limited	-
18 – 25	Corresponding to those in higher education and those entering the workplace.	Research on the consumer Behaviour of China's " Generation Z " (born between 1995 and 2009) often uses the age of 18-25 as the key period.	The respondents are aged between 18 -55 (97.9% in total)
26 – 34	Young white-collar workers in the early to mid-career stage	Most of China's " Post-90s " generation (born between 1990-1999) are in this stage, focusing on quality and experience consumption.	
35 – 49	Middle-aged group, career stability, heavy family responsibilities	China's " Post-80s " generation (born between 1980-1989) pays more attention to practicality and cultural connotations in their consumption.	
50 – 55	Approaching retirement or in the transition period of retirement (the legal retirement age for women in China is 55)	In the study of China's " silver economy ", 55/60 years old is often used as the dividing line. Retired women have become a potential group for "silver tourism".	The sample covers the main working-age population
≥56	Retired people (men retire at 60, but some women have already retired)	The core group of the silver economy research (≥55) has fewer sources of income and prefers cost-effectiveness and nostalgic culture.	-

Appendix P: Scope and Standards of Statistical Method Evaluation Indicators

Scope and standards of statistical method evaluation indicators				
Methods/ Indicators	Abbreviation	Evaluation criteria range	Explanation and References	This research
Chi-Square/Degrees of Freedom	χ^2/df	$1 < \chi^2/df < 3$ Excellent: <2 Acceptable: 2-3 Borderline: 3-5 Unacceptable: >5	Measures the overall goodness of fit of the model, the smaller the value, the better (Kline, 2015)	This research $\chi^2/df = 1.142$, goodness of fit is excellent
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	RMSEA	Excellent: ≤ 0.05 Good: 0.05-0.08 Critical: 0.08-0.10 Unacceptable: > 0.10	Smaller values indicate lower model error (Hu & Bentler, 1999)	This research has an RMSEA of 0.015, with a very low error
Normed Fit Index	NFI	Excellent: ≥ 0.95 Acceptable: ≥ 0.90 Unacceptable: < 0.90	Reflects the degree of improvement of the model compared with the independent model (Bentler & Bonett, 1980)	This research NFI = 0.951, good fit
Incremental Fit Index	IFI	Excellent: ≥ 0.95 Acceptable: ≥ 0.90 Unacceptable: < 0.90	Sensitive to sample size, the higher the value, the better the model fit (Bollen, 1989)	This research IFI = 0.994, excellent fit
Comparative Fit Index	CFI	Excellent: ≥ 0.95 Acceptable: ≥ 0.90 Unacceptable: < 0.90	Measures the relative improvement of a model over a baseline model (Bentler, 1990)	This research CFI = 0.994, excellent fit
Goodness of Fit Index	GFI	Excellent: ≥ 0.95 Acceptable: ≥ 0.90 Critical: 0.85-0.90 Unacceptable: < 0.85	The closer the GFI value is to 1, the better the model fit is (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1984)	This research GFI = 0.927, acceptable

Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index	AGFI	Excellent: ≥ 0.90 Acceptable: ≥ 0.85 Unacceptable: < 0.85	Correcting the complexity bias of GFI (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1984) The closer the AGFI value is to 1, the better the model fit is.	This research AGFI = 0.919, acceptable
Standardized Path Coefficient	β	Strong effect: $\beta \geq 0.5$ Medium effect: $0.3 \leq \beta < 0.5$ Weak effect: $\beta < 0.3$	Assess the effect strength of relationships between variables (Cohen, 1988)	Aesthetics $\beta = 0.635$ is a strong effect
		Excellent: $\beta \geq 0.7$ Acceptable: $0.5 \leq \beta < 0.7$ To be deleted: $\beta < 0.5$	Verify the reliability and validity of the measurement tool (Hair et al., 2010)	“Care and Travel” $\beta = 0.789 - 0.951 > 0.7$, excellent
Critical Ratio	C.R.	$ C.R. > 1.96 \rightarrow p < 0.05$ (significant) $ C.R. > 2.58 \rightarrow p < 0.01$ (highly significant) $ C.R. > 3.29 \rightarrow p < 0.001$ (extremely significant)	$C.R. = B / S.E.$, essentially a t-value used to test whether the path coefficient is significantly different from 0. (Cohen, 1988)	$C.R. > 21$, all far above the threshold; all path coefficients are highly significant ($p < 0.001$)
Reliability Analysis	Cronbach's α	Excellent: > 0.9 Good: 0.7-0.9 Acceptable: 0.6-0.7 Unreliable: < 0.6	Measures the internal consistency of the scale, with higher values indicating stronger reliability (Nunnally, 1978)	The design characteristic dimension of This research is $\alpha = 0.970$, and the reliability is excellent
Validity Analysis	KMO	Very suitable: > 0.9 Suitable: 0.8-0.9	Test whether the data is suitable for factor analysis. The	This research KMO =

		Normal: 0.7-0.8 Unsuitable: <0.7	higher the value, the better the efficiency (Kaiser, 1974)	0.982, very suitable for factor analysis
Factor Loadings	FL	Excellent: ≥ 0.7 Acceptable: 0.5-0.7 To be deleted: <0.5	The correlation between variables and factors in factor analysis. The higher the FL, the more effective the measurement item (Hair et al., 2010)	The FL in This research was > 0.7 , and the construct validity was excellent.
Probability Value	p-value	Significant: $p < 0.05$ Highly significant: $p < 0.01$ Extremely significant: $p < 0.001$ Marginally significant: $0.05 < p \leq 0.10$ Not significant: $p > 0.10$	The threshold for rejecting the null hypothesis in hypothesis testing (Fisher, 1928)	Gender adjustment effect $p < 0.001$, extremely significant
Analysis of Variance	F-value for ANOVA	The larger the F value, the more significant the difference between the groups (need to be judged in combination with the degrees of freedom and the p-value)	Used to compare the mean differences of multiple groups. When the F value is significant ($p < 0.05$), the null hypothesis is rejected (Fisher, 1928)	Age group $F = 2.815$, $p = 0.021$, significant difference
Delta R-squared	ΔR^2	$\Delta R^2 > 0.02$ indicates that the moderating effect is of practical significance	The incremental contribution of moderator variables to the explanatory power of the model (Aiken & West, 1991)	Gender adjustment $\Delta R^2 = 0.033$, the effect is significant

Pearson correlation matrix	Pearson's r	$r \geq 0.5$: strong correlation $0.3 \leq r < 0.5$: moderate correlation $r < 0.3$: weak correlation	Test the linear correlation between variables, the value range is -1 - $+1$, $r > 0$: positive correlation $r < 0$: negative correlation $r = 0$: no linear correlation (Cohen, 1988)	$r = 0.410$ Design features have a moderately positive correlation with purchase intention
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Appendix Q: Mediating Effect Ratio

Table 4.40 shows the specific values of direct effect (DE) and mediating effect (IE):

Direct effect (DE) = 0.255

Mediating effect (IE):

H4a (perceived authenticity) = 0.062

H4b (purchase behaviour and authenticity) = 0.182

H4c (attitude towards imitation products) = 0.091

Total mediating effect = $0.062 + 0.182 + 0.091 = 0.335$

Total effect = $DE + IE = 0.255 + 0.335 = 0.590$

Mediating effect ratio = $0.335 / 0.590 \approx 56.78\%$ (about 57%)